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The word tsedeq in Deutero Isaiah

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THE WORD TSEDEQ IN DEUTERO ISAIAH

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

The Hebrew noun tsedeq (fem. tsdaqah) is usually rendered in English translations of the Bible as "righteousness." The verb tsedeq is most frequently translated as "to be righteous," "to be in the right," or "to be just," with the hiph'il form of the verb as "to justify" or "to declare righteous." The adjective tsadiq is most frequently translated as "righteous" or "just." In view of the diversity of ways in which the root is employed, translators have gradually expanded the vocabulary enlisted for rendering the semantic variations of tsedeq into English. The Revised Standard Version, for example, translates the Hebrew noun sometimes as "right," "vindication," "victory," "salvation," "triumph," "deliverance," "truth," "equity," et al.

It is the purpose of this study to examine the semantic variations adhering to the word tsedeq in Isaiah 40-55 (Deutero Isaiah). It is our thesis that the word tsedeq does not contain an essential meaning which can be ascertained apart from its contextual referents. The word tsedeq is not invested by the author of chs. 40-55 with a semantic distinctiveness that is primarily oriented to an explicit theological reality. We do not believe, for example, that tsedeq attains "the status of the key to the understanding of the whole divine work of salvation."[1] The bestowal of such a "status" seems to us an attempt to inject the word with the values of post-biblical theology.

The field of biblical theology has been most active in utilizing biblical terms as keys to theological patterns. Our first chapter briefly delineates the presuppositions

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[1]Walther Eichrodt, Theology of the Old Testament, trans. J. A. Baker (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1961), I, 246.

governing the treatment of tsedeq in the studies of several biblical theologians. The second chapter circumscribes the locus of our study of tsedeq, and describes some of the factors influencing the employment of this term in Deutero Isaiah. The third chapter embodies a critical analysis of the word tsedeq in Deutero Isaiah, with particular attention paid to the context sustaining its application.

In this thesis, unless otherwise noted, biblical quotations in English follow the Revised Standard Version; except where emendations are noted, all transliterations from the Hebrew follow the vocalization of the Massoretic Text.

CHAPTER I

BIBLICAL THEOLOGY AND THE WORD TSEDEQ

Walther Eichrodt's approach to Old Testament theology is synthetic, i.e., it purports to exhibit the basic unity of the Old Testament "in its essential structure and fundamental orientation."[1] In turn, these "essential" and "fundamental" elements are wedded to, and consummated in, the New Testament material. According to Eichrodt, "the self-disclosure of the divine will in the historical guidance of Israel" finds fulfillment in the New Testament, thus overcoming "the aimlessness into which later Judaism saw itself led in its attempt to put its Old Testament heritage into practice, and which was inwardly crippling to the conduct of its daily life."[2] As we shall see, the presupposition of "the existence of a particular kind of connexion between the saving events of the Old Testament and the transcendent saving events of the New"[3] has had a tremendous influence on scholarly treatment of the word tsedeq. This treatment is often the result of an approach wherein biblical unity is discerned in the presence of a number of New Testament terms "of rich theological content which are well rooted in the Hebraic soil and which form a kind of framework for the theological structures of the New Testament."[4]

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[1]Walther Eichrodt, Theology of the Old Testament, trans. J. A. Baker (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1961), I, 517.

[2]Ibid., I, 519.

[3]Gerhard von Rad, Old Testament Theology, trans. D. M. G. Stalker (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1962), II, 371.

[4]James Barr, The Semantics of Biblical Language (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), p. 5.

Thus the New Testament Greek counterparts of words such as tsedeq are assembled according to "an appropriate lexical procedure which will bring out their coherence with Hebraic thought."[5] It is not surprising, therefore, that Eichrodt found Hermann Cremer's New Testament lexical work pivotal to his own delineation of the Hebrew word tsedeq. Cremer's description of the word tsedeq is paraphrased by Eichrodt, and is quoted by Gerhard von Rad in his own Old Testament Theology as follows:

> Every relationship brings with it certain claims upon conduct, and the satisfaction of these claims, which issue from the relationship and in which alone the relationship can persist, is described by our term tsedeq...tsedeq is out and out a term denoting relationship...it does this in the sense of referring to a real relationship between two parties...and not to the relationship of an object under consideration to an idea.[6]

For Eichrodt, Cremer's formulation was confirmed by J. Pedersen's demonstration "of the primitive basis of Israelite psychology" which evoked "the function of the community relationship for the total understanding of life."[7] For the ancient Israelite, there was "no such thing as an abstract formal concept which might be classified according to an objective standard."[8] In other words, there is no static, abstract Greek concept here, but a concrete and dynamic relationship which "implies positive constructive behavior, aimed at advancing the good of the community."[9] As for God, "his righteousness implies the same kind of right

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[5]Ibid.

[6]Hermann Cremer, Biblisch-theologisches Worterbuch (1893), pp. 273-75, cited by von Rad, op. cit., I, 371.

[7]Eichrodt, op. cit., I, 241.

[8]Op. cit., I, 240.

[9]Op. cit., I, 241.

conduct," determined by Israel's "position as the covenant people."[10] We are not concerned with "a mere distributive concept of justice" here, but with acts of righteousness which, through the mediation of Israel's election, seek to bring "blessing to the whole world."[11] Whereas in earlier times "God's righteousness seems only to have been spoken of in connection with his help against outside enemies,"[12] the prophets later associated God's righteousness with his holiness, and based God's "intervention for the restoration of the covenant people firmly on his position as Lord of the Universe." God's righteousness was thus liberated, claims Eichrodt, "from the egoistic limitations of national self-interest," and became representative of "the world-wide purposes of divine authority."[13]

According to Eichrodt, it was "Deutero-Isaiah who first elevated the concept of God's righteousness to the status of the key to the understanding of the whole divine work of salvation." With this prophet, God's righteousness became coupled with concepts of "lovingkindness, loyalty and succour...But the decisive element was that of God's gift of salvation, both to Israel and to the Gentile world... this righteous dealing on God's part, which was at first purely a product of the covenant relationship," was transformed by Deutero Isaiah into a universal concept.[14] "God's loyal adherence to an eternal purpose shines forth in all its splendour," continues Eichrodt. "The maintenance of the fellowship now becomes the justification of the ungodly."

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[10] Op. cit., I, 241.
[11] Op. cit., I, 244.
[12] Op. cit., I, 242.
[13] Op. cit., I, 245.
[14] Op. cit., I, 246-47.

Human effort is of small importance since "the relationship of legal obligation has become the relationship of grace."[15]

At first glance it is difficult to ascertain the decisive importance of Cremer's definition for Eichrodt's formulation of tsedeq as an essential concept in salvation history. Cremer's definition, which speaks continuously of "relationship" while stressing the concrete character of this relationship, seems devoid of theological content. It merely seems to offer a starting point for Eichrodt's more energetic discussion of the "concept."

It was Cremer's presupposition that the language of the New Testament--a language rooted in the Hebrew language--reflects "the ultimate theological realities."[16] From a survey of the lexical stock of the Bible, Cremer attempted to portray the "language-moulding power" of Christianity.[17] He made a distinction between the "old content" of the words, and the "new content." This new content was not, in most cases, generated by the impact of Christianity, but was usually "the result of the expression in Greek of an ancient heritage of Hebrew thought."[18] For Cremer, "the 'old' is the Hellenic-Hellenistic thinking associated with the words, the 'new' is the Hebraic-Christian stream of thought."[19]

The contrast between Greek and Hebrew thought, which is reflected in Cremer's definition of tsedeq, is of fundamental importance to many biblical theologians. It developed out of the biblical theologians' attempts to view the biblical material as a unity, and to demonstrate a system

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[15] Op. cit., I, 247.
[16] Barr, op. cit., p. 44.
[17] Op. cit., p. 238.
[18] Op. cit., p. 241.
[19] Op. cit., p. 241.

of intra-biblical connections. These attempts were reactions against both the Hellenistic interpretations of the New Testament by philosophical theologians, and against the fragmentation of the Bible wrought by the analytic techniques of literary criticism. "The reaction tried to show that the New Testament did not necessarily share the typical forms of Greek thought just because it was written in Greek, and that a better more natural sense could be made of its words by relating them to the heritage of Hebraic thought."[20] It was also an attempt to show that the New Testament, and not Rabbinic literature, was the rightful heir to the "dynamic" movement of the Old Testament.

Returning to Cremer's definition of tsedeq, we see that he emphasizes the dynamic and concrete (Hebraic) aspects of the word, as opposed to static and abstract (Greek) aspects. Tsedeq is the satisfaction of claims deriving from a relationship; tsedeq itself denotes an active relationship---"a real relationship between two parties" and not a quality abstracted from an idea of tsedeq. Cremer's key word is "relationship" because it opposes any idea of an internal quality or of an actual condition of tsedeq. There is no idea of a norm here, or of an ethical quality; "the specific relationship in which the agent finds himself is the norm."[21] Tsedeq is unconditional: "a person is righteous because he acts justly; he does not act justly because he is righteous."[22] This latter statement is an example of the semantic twists which the biblical theologians

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[20]Op. cit., pp. 9-10.

[21]Von Rad, op. cit., I, 371.

[22]Edmond Jacob, Theology of the Old Testament, trans. Arthur W. Heathcote and Philip J. Allcock (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1958), p. 95.

are often forced to construct in order to describe tsedeq as an action instead of a state.

As an abstract noun, tsedeq poses a particular problem for those biblical theologians who assume that the concreteness of the Hebrew mind is reflected in--what they wrongly consider--the paucity of abstract nouns in the Hebrew.[23] Thus they take great pains in showing that although tsedeq is an abstract noun, the Hebrews did not think abstractly about tsedeq. Probably they usually did not; but neither did the Greeks ("abstract" as a description of a noun is rather obscure anyway, and we doubt that the appellation reflects the thought processes behind a noun's social use). Here is Gregory Vlastos' description of what the Greeks commonly understood by the word dikaiosyne:

> The word could carry a sense broad enough to cover all virtuous conduct towards others, though for the most part it was used in a more specific sense to mean refraining from pleonexia, i.e. from gaining some advantage for oneself by grabbing what belongs to another--his property, his wife, his office, and the like--or by denying him what is (morally and legally) due him--fulfillment of promises made to him, repayment of monies owed to him, respect for his good name and reputation, and so forth. What holds these two senses together is that dikaiosyne is the pre-eminently social virtue... And this is precisely what is missing in the Platonic definition, which purports to define a man's justice in terms of the order which prevails within his psyche. This is odd, and altogether without parallel in the Platonic corpus. Though Plato sometimes redefines Greek words, his formulae manage to keep good contact with the usual meaning...Not so here. If a contemporary had been told that there is an enviable state of soul, characterized by proper functioning of every one of its parts, only by accident could he have guessed that this is supposed to be the moral attribute of justice.[24]

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[23]Barr, op. cit., p. 28.

[24]Gregory Vlastos, "Justice and Happiness in the Republic," Plato: A Collection of Critical Essays, Gregory Vlastos, editor (New York: Doubleday & Co., 1971), pp. 70-72.

It is obvious that the common Greek understanding of the word dikaiosyne is no less "concrete" than—and very similar to—the common Hebrew understanding of the word tsedeq as it is used in numerous biblical passages. The abstract Platonic definition is just as inimical to the common Greek usage as it is to the Hebrew usage.

As mentioned above, the efforts to contrast Greek and Hebrew thought were generated by attempts to view the Bible as a unity, and to demonstrate the intrinsic relationship between the Old Testament and the New. Important New Testament words (or "concepts") were seen as natural extensions of certain Old Testament words, i.e., the cumulative development of a specific word was viewed as a "prefiguration" of the use of that word in the New Testament. Thus Paul's use of the word dikaiosyne was considered a natural heir to the Hebrew tsedeq, especially insofar as the Hebrew term is found in a context which has something to do with the historical acts of God. In such contexts, the word is deemed to be oriented to the "salvation history" which culminates in the New Testament. In Deutero Isaiah, tsedeq and its cognates are used primarily in contexts concerned with God's activity. This is why the description of tsedeq in Deutero Isaiah is considered crucial to many biblical theologians.

For Eichrodt, as we have seen, tsedeq implies community conduct and God's own conduct in relation to the covenant. But in Deutero Isaiah, the word expands into a "key to the understanding of the whole divine work of salvation." It becomes a universal concept implying a "relationship of grace." Its connection with Paul's dikaiosyne becomes obvious. Thus viewed, Paul's dikaiosyne is properly alienated from "abstract" Greek usage dealing with normative moral and legal conduct. It is instead rooted in an

assumed Hebrew "salvation vocabulary." Cremer posited tsedeq as a concrete and dynamic relationship because "for Paul the term righteousness of God has a specific, dynamic meaning. It primarily refers to how God acts and relates to man and his history."[25] "God reckons faith as righteousness and thus puts a man in the right before him...this righteousness is not an ethical quality, but a relationship."[26] Cremer's emphases in his formulation of tsedeq were strategic emphases, serving a theological purpose. Eichrodt's enthusiastic treatment of tsedeq in Deutero Isaiah was an elaboration of this purpose.

At this juncture it should be made clear that we are not here concerned with the validity of any theological doctrine, nor with whether or not certain events in the Old Testament can be "recognised as prefigurations"[27] of New Testament events. Nor are we concerned with actual or imagined differences between Greek and Hebrew thought processes. Instead, we are questioning a methodology which seeks to demonstrate these things through lexical stocks, as if the religion of ancient Israel consisted primarily "in the issuing either of new words or of new word-concepts or of new conceptual 'content' for old words."[28] We are specifically concerned with how this methodology has affected the understanding of the word tsedeq as it appears in Deutero Isaiah.

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[25]Robert A. Spivey and D. Moody Smith, Jr., Anatomy of the New Testament, 2nd edition (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1974), p. 338.

[26]Ibid., 351-52.

[27]Von Rad, op. cit., II, 371.

[28]Barr, op. cit., p. 263.

Unlike Eichrodt, Gerhard von Rad does not consider the primary task of biblical theology to reside in a description of the unity of the Old Testament.[29] But like Eichrodt, he assumes a "particular kind of connexion between the saving events of the Old Testament and the transcendent saving events of the New."[30] Therefore, von Rad does not confine himself "to the Old Testament's own understanding of the texts," but views them "as part of a logical progression whose end lies in the future."[31] While von Rad does not ostensibly believe that the correspondence between the two Testaments lies "primarily in the field of religious terminology,"[32] we see that much of his work hinges on "the ultimate theological reach" of certain key words which "only become clear to us on the basis of the New Testament."[33] One of von Rad's key words (he calls them "concepts") is tsedeq. Von Rad's exposition of tsedeq pivots on Cremer's definition, since he too is attracted by differences in Hebraic and Greek ("Western") thought processes. Also, von Rad views tsedeq as a prefiguration of Pauline usage which failed in finding its "ultimate and appropriate fulfilment in the Old Testament."[34]

In his attempt to exhibit how "ontologically different" the Hebrew use of tsedeq is from the Greek, von Rad decided that "the numerous references in which tsdaqah appears in connexion with the preposition b- suggests that tsdaqah seems also to have been understood in an oddly

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[29]Von Rad, op. cit., II, 427.
[30]Op. cit., II, 371.
[31]Op. cit., II, 371.
[32]Op. cit., II, 382.
[33]Op. cit., II, 372.
[34]Op. cit., II, 373.

spatial way, as something like a sphere, or power-charged area...Of course the exegete here encounters great difficulties in interpretation, for this spatial and material idea of tsdaqah is so strange to us."[35] We would say, instead, that any interpretive difficulties stem not from the b- prefix (which usually gives us the adverbial form of tsdaqah), but from obscure, often metaphorical contexts, or from puerile efforts to envisage the word as ontologically different.

It is worth noting here that both Eichrodt and von Rad acknowledge J. Pedersen's contribution to their own perceptions into the ancient Israelite's "ontologically different" conception of tsedeq. Pedersen, as is well known, "sought to explain Israel's religious culture by analyzing the characteristic conceptions of the Hebrew mentality."[36] According to Pedersen, these conceptions corresponded to primitive notions. His analysis was grounded on the assumption that the Hebrew language—in its grammatical structure and lexical stock—was a perfect reflection of Israelite thought.[37] Glancing briefly at Pedersen's lengthy interpretation of "righteousness," we find that "A just and true god is a god who throughout agrees with the being of a god...to have a soul constructed in such a manner that it could maintain itself through all actions."[38] Since righteousness is usually a claim on the stronger, it is a "kingly

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[35]Op. cit., I, 376.

[36]Herbert F. Hahn, Old Testament in Modern Research (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1954), p. 68.

[37]Barr, op. cit., p. 41.

[38]Johannes Pedersen, Israel: Its Life and Culture (Copenhagen: Branner Og Korch, 1926, reprinted 1964), II, 338-39.

virtue."[39] According to Pedersen, "righteousness is never an abstract demand which is put in the same way to all men, not something external, but the very constitution of the soul."

> The mighty has more righteousness than the weak, because he has greater strength; his goodness is greater, because he can put more into it; his claims, but also his duties are greater, because he has the power to give and take more.[40]

Von Rad credits Pedersen for "having unfolded the concept in its differentiation from all idealistic and humanistic ideas."[41] But to us, Pedersen's description seems hopelessly idealistic--an attempt to read a few theoretical ideas concerning primitive psychology into the biblical text. It is perhaps ironic that Pedersen's phraseology in the preceding passages is surprisingly similar to that of Aristotle's Nichomachean Ethics, and even to some of Nietzsche's writings. His phraseology--supposedly indicative of anthropological investigations into primitive concepts such as mana--often seems disconcertingly reminiscent of some idealistic "Western" philosophies.

Returning to von Rad, we see that tsedeq, when predicated of God, means God's "saving acts in history," the use of which "reaches its climax in Deutero Isaiah."[42] Yet in contrast to Eichrodt, von Rad's sensitivity to form-criticism allows him to recognize that Deutero Isaiah's use of the term is often determined by the cultic language which he enlisted in his poetry, "and is in consequence certainly older than Deutero-Isaiah himself. No radical transformation

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[39] Ibid., II, 344.

[40] Ibid., II, 360-61.

[41] Von Rad, op. cit., I, 376 n.

[42] Op. cit., I, 372.

or development of the ancient Israelite idea of Jahweh's righteousness is discernible."[43] In his search for tsedeq as a developmental prefiguration of New Testament fulfillment, von Rad does not tarry with Deutero Isaiah.

With some hyperbole, von Rad claims elsewhere that "the term 'righteous' (tsadiq) was scarcely predicable of anyone in ancient Israel apart from cultic considerations."[44] Thus von Rad seeks the "theological reach" of the term in the so-called "confessional formulae." Whereas the earlier formulae (such as those found in Dt. 26 and Ezek. 18) "are such as an Israelite could use in all honesty, since they concerned demands which it was quite possible to meet fully," the later formulae (as found primarily in the Psalms) present us with "a progressively idealized portrait of the 'righteous man.'"[45] In this idealization, according to von Rad, we see a process which is becoming "subjective and inward-looking, so that the accent is now upon the inward and personal attitude of the worshipper."[46] Reliance on one's own righteousness is gradually viewed as untenable. Faith becomes connected with righteousness. Von Rad finds the earliest example of this connection in Gen. 15:6 where tsedeq has been transferred from objective use to "a sphere of a free and wholly personal relationship between God and Abraham."[47] Here he contrasts the Elohist's view of "inward

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[43] Op. cit., I, 372.

[44] Gebhard von Rad, "'Righteousness' and 'Life' in the Cultic Language of the Psalms," The Problem of the Hexateuch and Other Essays, trans. E. W. Trueman Dicken (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1966), p. 249.

[45] Ibid., p. 251.

[46] Von Rad, "Faith Reckoned as Righteousness," The Problem of the Hexateuch, op. cit., p. 130.

[47] Op. cit., p. 129.

faith" with the less sublime description of an objective cultic act in the Yahwist passages of 15:7 ff.[48] Von Rad's comparison is somewhat weakened by his blithe acceptance of he'emin as a term indicating "inward faith." It is all but obviated when we consider the likelihood that both 15:6 and 15:7 ff. are products of the Yahwist.[49] Still, we are not interested in refuting von Rad's search for New Testament prototypes in the Old, but merely in showing his attempt to ascertain a theological pattern in the development of a "key" word. We also find it important that--unlike most biblical theologians working with tsedeq--he did not find Deutero Isaiah's use of tsedeq as essential to the exposure of this pattern. While we question von Rad's attempts to show the "theological reach" of certain words, we find that his form-critical awareness makes many of his interpretations more plausible. The form-critical approach has at least made him wary of over-extending the scope of many of the contexts in which these words are found.

Norman H. Snaith's approach to tsedeq is etymological. Unlike von Rad and Eichrodt, Snaith argues that tsedeq implies conformity to an established norm.[50] He derives his argument from "the original meaning of the Arabic tsadaqa" which he defines as "to be straight, firm."[51] Tsedeq "thus very easily comes to be used as a figure for that which is, or ought to be, firmly established, successful

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[48] Op. cit., p. 130.

[49] Cf. E. A. Speiser, "Genesis," The Anchor Bible (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday & Co., 1964), pp. 110-115.

[50] Norman H. Snaith, The Distinctive Ideas of the Old Testament (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1946), p. 92.

[51] Ibid., p. 91.

and enduring in human affairs."[52] Early on, the Hebrew tsedeq became connected with ethical and juristic conduct, but by the eighth century, according to Snaith, it is already "invading the salvation vocabulary." But tsedeq in the juristic sense is "incidental because tsedeq actually stands for the establishment of God's will in the land."[53] Snaith claims that God's will is especially concerned with "those who cannot themselves secure their own rights."[54] Therefore, tsedeq "shows a persistent tendency to topple over into benevolence, and easily to have a special reference to those who stand in dire need of a Helper."[55] The idea in tsedeq of "mercy first and justice afterwards" was clear to early Greek translators of the Old Testament who sometimes rendered tsedeq as eleos (pity, mercy).[56] This is most convincingly confirmed in the post-biblical use of the word, where the Hebrew tsdaqah, like the Arabic tsadaqa, came most frequently to mean "almsgiving and benevolence."[57] Although he admits that this later usage does not prove anything in itself with regard to Old Testament usage, Snaith cavalierly claims that "where there is smoke, there is fire." Post-biblical usage "may be taken as a legitimate development of an element which was contained in the root from the beginning."[58]

According to Snaith, a further stage in the development of the word tsedeq which departs from any ethical

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[52] Ibid., p. 92.
[53] Ibid., p. 87.
[54] Ibid., p. 88.
[55] Ibid., p. 97.
[56] Ibid., p. 89.
[57] Ibid., p. 88.
[58] Ibid., p. 90.

content, is found in Deutero Isaiah. Here we find that the meaning is "chiefly soteriological...The word forms part of Second-Isaiah's salvation vocabulary...the emphasis is on God's mighty work in saving the humble." This emphasis "reaches its greatest heights of inspiration" in the vicarious "suffering of the Servant, bruised and dying in order that the many transgressors may be brought once more to prosperity according to the good pleasure and will of God." Snaith concludes that the "idea of salvation is everywhere dominant."[59]

For Snaith, then, tsedeq primarily means "benevolence" and "mercy" which in Deutero Isaiah becomes merciful and unconditional salvation. Here, according to Snaith, we are presented with the "rudiments" of Pauline usage where "Righteousness is a result of salvation and not a condition of it."[60] Snaith takes great pains in showing that Paul's usage must not be studied from "the Greek point of view." The Hebrew meanings "must be carried over into the New Testament."[61]

It is interesting to note the strategic twists that Snaith performs in order to obtain his theological goal. That tsedeq stands for a "norm in the affairs of the world,"[62] which in turn stands "for the establishment of God's will in the land," is presupposed by the "original meaning of the Arabic tsadaqa." That God's tsedeq "shows a persistent tendency to topple over into benevolence" and mercy is confirmed both by post-biblical Hebrew and Arabic usage, and also by the sporadic rendering of tsedeq in the Septuagint

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[59] Ibid., pp. 116-17.
[60] Ibid., p. 211.
[61] Ibid., p. 215.
[62] Ibid., p. 92.

as eleos. Therefore, the idea of benevolence and mercy must have been "contained in the root from the beginning." In Deutero Isaiah, the word is "soteriological," which means merciful and unconditional salvation. We are thus given a guide to a pervasive element in Hebrew thought that culminates in Pauline theology. The possible remoteness of the etymological associations are ignored for the sake of an arbitrary selective process that allows Snaith to make connections which will cohere to a desired theological pattern. He totally ignores the complex historical and literary fabric in which the word is used. It is an exaggeration, to say the least, to regard the sporadic translation in the Septuagint of tsedeq as eleos, as proof that tsedeq means "a benevolence going beyond strict justice."[63] It is etymologically absurd to believe that because tsedeq came to mean "almsgiving and benevolence," this meaning was "contained in the root from the beginning." Elsewhere, Snaith writes that "there is a fundamental motif in a word which tends to endure, whatever other changes the years may bring. This fundamental 'theme' of a word is often curiously determinative of later meanings."[64] This suggests that we are not dealing with a historical study of a word's past, but are instead attempting to establish the essential meaning of the word. Such an attempt is, we believe, an idealistic perversion of proper etymological methods and objectives. In Snaith's interpretation of tsedeq, "etymological connections which appear to be theologically attractive are simply allowed to take charge of the whole interpretation and no real attention is given to the things being said and

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[63] Ibid., p. 89.

[64] Norman H. Snaith, "The Language of the Old Testament," The Interpreter's Bible, George Arthur Buttrick, editor (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1956), I, 224.

the particular semantic contribution of the words used."[65]

As we have seen, the preceding biblical theologians have invested the word tsedeq with a semantic distinctiveness that is primarily oriented to certain theological values. While not questioning the probity of these values, we dispute a methodology that utilizes tsedeq (or any other word, for that matter) as a key to theological patterns. These biblical theologians are quite explicit concerning the subjective perspectives and presuppositions with which they approach the Old Testament material. There is no question of deception here, and for this reason we have singled out their treatments of tsedeq for criticism. By doing so, we are stressing the importance of recognizing the post-biblical theological associations and overtones adhering to such Hebrew words as tsedeq, yeshu'a ("salvation"), go'el ("redeemer"), emunah ("faith"), chesed ("lovingkindness"), etc. Post-biblical associations and overtones are obstacles to any attempt at studying the use of the word objectively; they must be recognized before any non-theological inquiry can occur.

Perhaps a Christian or a Jew cannot avoid approaching the material with certain predispositions and apologetic inclinations. Yet the preceding biblical theologians have chosen to ground their scholarly inquiries on an amplified respect for such subjective intrusions. By doing so, they often come dangerously close to perpetrating devotional eisegesis rather than scholarly exegesis. While it is not within our scope to evaluate the overall merit of biblical theology, the fact that their conclusions have often been extremely influential in ostensibly non-theological

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[65]Barr, op. cit., p. 159.

interpretations, confirms the need to question their exegetical methods. This influence has proven especially diffuse in the general scholarly treatment of biblical terminology. In The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, for example, E. R. Achtemeier's article on "Righteousness in the OT" is dominated by the conclusions of biblical theologians. Her brief bibliography is almost exclusively comprised of biblical theological works, including those of Schultz, Eichrodt, and von Rad (also included are Cremer and Pedersen).[66]

Post-biblical theological associations permeate many of the major commentaries on Deutero Isaiah, and are especially obvious in the value attached to certain key words. We find this to be true in studies by such excellent scholars as Torrey, North, Muilenburg, and Blank. The problem often stems not so much from an uncritical acceptance of biblical theology, but from the fact that exegetical writers have often been obliged to depend on their own lexicographical researches, "sometimes with unfortunate results through undue reliance on 'root meanings' and inadequate attention to semantic histories."[67] The biblical theologians present us with explicit, exaggerated and readily available manifestations of that which is often more implicitly and/or subconsciously present in ostensibly non-theological works (and which may even become inadvertantly present in our own description of tsedeq in Deutero Isaiah). For this reason, we have focused on their approaches to the word tsedeq.

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[66]E. R. Achtemeier, "Righteousness in the OT," The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, George Arthur Buttrick, editor (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1962), R-Z, 80-85.

[67]A. M. Honeyman, "Semitic Epigraphy and Hebrew Philology," The Old Testament and Modern Study, H. H. Rowley, editor (London: Oxford University Press, 1956), p. 276.

CHAPTER II

PRELIMINARY REMARKS FOR A STUDY OF THE WORD TSEDEQ IN DEUTERO ISAIAH

The Locus of Our Study

In our study of the word tsedeq in Deutero Isaiah, we shall largely confine ourselves to chs. 40-55 of the Old Testament book of Isaiah. These chapters consist of a series of poems and oracles concerning "the rapidly approaching overthrow of Babylon and the return of the Jews to their homeland" following their exile.[1] They were composed by an unknown person, probably between 547-538 B. C., i.e., subsequent to the spectacular victories over Medes and Lydia attained by the Persian conqueror Cyrus II (d. 529 B. C.), and up until that king's entry into Babylon in 538.

We agree with Lindblom that originally these poems and oracles were probably recited before an audience, and that "their Sitz im Leben was public days of national lamentation, gatherings in the synagogues, and private circles...Possibly the sayings were sometimes...circulated as fly-sheets among the exiles."[2] The total integration of the material was probably not accomplished by the author himself. "It gives the impression of being the work of a disciple, who was also a collector of the revelations of his master."[3] For our purposes, there is little to be gained by attempting to break the chapters down into their

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[1]Christopher R. North, The Second Isaiah (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 2.

[2]J. Lindblom, Prophecy in Ancient Israel (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1962), p. 270.

[3]Ibid.

originally independent units. On the average, scholars estimate some 50 independent pieces.[4] We agree with North that "between the small-unit theory on the one hand, and an elaborately constructed, perfectly integrated edition...on the other, it is difficult to decide exactly where we should stand. The truth lies somewhere between these extremes, it matters little where."[5] Understanding the book, then, as a "shapely and orderly document"[6] consisting of a series of originally fragmented units, we see no reason to view the so-called Servant-songs independently in our treatment of tsedeq. We shall agree expeditiously with Snaith that there "are no Servant-songs in any exclusive sense."[7] Allowing for occasional exceptions, chs. 40-55 "have enough consistency of style and spirit and content to be viewed as a unit apart, and to merit a name," viz., Deutero Isaiah[8] (for convenience, we shall treat this name as the name of a person, as well as of a book).

Our acceptance of the inclusive integrity of chs. 40-55, to the exclusion of chs. 56-66, is for purposes of convenience only; to do otherwise would demand a detailed literary analysis. Nevertheless, this exclusion will not preclude our addressing some passages in chs. 56-66 as if they too were composed by the author of chs. 40-55. This stems from our presupposition that—in spite of their more eclectic character—chs. 56-66 are, in fact, primarily the

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[4]Norman H. Snaith, "Isaiah 40-66," Supplements to Vetus Testamentum, Vol. XIV (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1967), p. 166.

[5]North, op. cit., p. 12.

[6]Op. cit., p. 8.

[7]Snaith, op. cit., p. 169.

[8]Sheldon H. Blank, Prophetic Faith in Isaiah (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1958), p. 51.

later work of the author of chs. 40-55. Yehezkel Kaufmann claims that the division between chs. 40-55 and 56-66 occurred because some Christian scholars viewed Deutero Isaiah as a "liberal Protestant who negates the ritual commandments. The Christian scholars look upon Deutero-Isaiah as the founder of prophetic universalism and one of the harbingers of Christianity. How, then, can a prophecy concerning the sabbath and the Temple be the message of such a prophet?"[9] Although there is an element of truth here, we regard Kaufmann's statement as an unjust product of his own Jewish apologetic (which in fact, permeates much of his work). While some Christian scholars have attempted to transform Deutero Isaiah into a "liberal Protestant," it is equally true that Jewish scholars, such as Martin Buber and Sheldon Blank, have tried to correlate the prophet's message with certain cherished values of liberal Judaism. Furthermore, the division is not merely inspired by divergencies in "ritual" interests, but also by inconsistencies in style, and the uncertainty of the historical background of the later chapters.[10] Pfeiffer proposes that chs. 56-66 were composed in order to interpret the earlier chapters for a later generation. He states that "there is more pessimism, more concern with the externalities of religion, more nationalism, more legalistic zeal" in the later chapters.[11] We believe that, if anything, chs. 40-55 are more stridently nationalistic than chs. 56-66, as should become evident

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[9]Yehezkel Kaufmann, The Babylonian Captivity and Deutero-Isaiah, trans. C. W. Efroymson (New York: Union of American Hebrew Congregations, 1970), p. 88.

[10]Aage Bentzen, Introduction to the Old Testament (Copenhagen: G. E. C. Gad, 1959), II, 109.

[11]Robert H. Pfeiffer, Introduction to the Old Testament (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1948), pp. 480-81.

later in our study. Still, the real changes in emphases and interests, even the somewhat meagre changes in style, do not necessitate the division. As Pfeiffer himself states, "in dealing with a highly imaginative work of Oriental origin it is hardly proper to demand clear and self-consistent thoughts."[12] He states this in support of the integrity of chs. 56-66, but it could just as well apply to 40-66. We believe that the inconsistencies do not indicate two authors, but a composition "by one prophet, but at different times" and under different circumstances.[13] We would add that inconsistencies in emphases and style are not an exclusively "Oriental" phenomenon; a quick comparison of James Joyce's Dubliners (1914) to his Finnegans Wake (1939) bears this out admirably (any author writing over a period of time would serve as well).

In spite of our presupposition of basic unity, and our contingent prerogative to appropriate passages in chs. 56-66 as if they belong to the same author of 40-55, we will rarely resort to doing so except where there is an obvious affinity of emphases, style and terminology.

Deutero Isaiah's Dominant Theme

For the purposes of our study, an in-depth analysis of Deutero Isaiah's thought is unnecessary. Undoubtedly, some aspects of his thought will become manifest as our inquiry proceeds. Nevertheless, it will prove beneficial to state very briefly the dominant theme of chs. 40-55. We understand this theme to be twofold: (1) exulted assertions

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[12] Ibid.

[13] Joseph Klausner, The Messianic Idea in Israel, trans. W. F. Stinespring (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1955), p. 148.

of the effective, monotheistic omnipotence of God; (2) the rescue of the exiles and their return to Jerusalem as a result of their god's jealous omnipotence. The predominance of the latter element of this theme is well expressed by Norman H. Snaith:

> Second Isaiah is generally recognized as being the Prophet of the Return, that is, of the return of the exiles from Babylonia to Jerusalem. Most scholars, however, go much farther than this and they find the climax of his message in the ideal of the Servant...usually with expiatory and intercessory functions, and in universalism, by which is meant a supra-nationalist appeal, that salvation is not for the Jews only, but for all the nations on earth. Such conclusions we believe to be wrong. The Return is not merely one of the themes of these...chapters, to be outshone by world-wide humanitarian ideals. It is the prophet's dominant theme.[14]

The major task of the prophet is to encourage the exiles, to convince them that the disparaged god of a weak, exiled people can---through his universal omnipotence---effect a victorious return. Time and again the prophet describes the superiority of his people's god over all others: "Israel's God is God."[15] Toward the other nations and their fabricated gods he harbors nothing but contempt. There is to be no "salvation" for these other nations, no international mission to the world: "the Lord is to lead exiled Israel to redemption and thereby cause the nations and their leaders---who until then held the exiles in contempt---to acknowledge abjectly the omnipotence of Israel's faithful God."[16] For Deutero Isaiah, Yahweh "is the God of Israel

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[14]Snaith, Vetus Testamentum, p. 147.

[15]Blank, op. cit., p. 73.

[16]Harry M. Orlinsky, "The So-Called 'Servant of the Lord' and 'Suffering Servant' in Second Isaiah," Supplements to Vetus Testamentum, Vol. XIV (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1967), p. 100.

exclusively...Israel's God is a universal God, not an international God."[17]

To say that his message is essentially nationalistic is not to say that Deutero Isaiah's idea of God is coarse and simplistic; his portrayal of the universal omnipotence of Yahweh the Creator presents us with a rich—even sublime—conceptual texture. It would seem to us presumptuous to attempt a formal statement of his conception of God in modern theological terms. To do so "defies both the ecstatic feelings of the poet and the literary guise in which it is set forth."[18] While abstracting speculative theological notions from Deutero Isaiah's poetry may be a valid exercise, we must keep in mind that the prophet's apprehension is more immediate and often without logical interference. His images often consist "of an articulation of verbal elements that, going beyond reference and the limits of discourse, embodies and offers a complex of feeling and thought."[19]

Deutero Isaiah's Language

Recognition that we are dealing with the thought and feelings of an accomplished poet, instead of novel theological statements, is of great importance for understanding the language that the prophet enlisted for his message. Deutero Isaiah posits no radical ideational transformation of the prophetic concept of God; the "concept of a universal and omnipotent God was new...only in emphasis...the Second Isaiah emphasized the universal aspect of God in his

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[17]Ibid., p. 41.

[18]James Muilenburg, "Isaiah, Chapters 40-66," The Interpreter's Bible, George Arthur Buttrick, editor (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1956), V, 398.

[19]William York Tindall, The Literary Symbol (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1965), p. 12.

efforts to explain to his fellow Judeans their exile in the foreign land of a great empire which had destroyed the Temple of their Lord and carried them captive from His land."[20] This same universally omnipotent God will now vindicate those who have been purged in exile; as their sovereign judge, he will now effect the rescue of his captive people. God is the cosmic king, the sovereign judge who fights Israel's battles; he is the liberator of the historical Exodus, the divine warrior of the Conquests. In these roles he will again manifest himself in a second exodus and entry into the land of Israel.

To express these ideas, Deutero Isaiah enlisted the festal-liturgical language of both the mythopoeic and the historical-reenactment elements of Israel's early cult. The latter element, which dramatized the events of the Exodus-Conquest, may be termed the "ritual conquest." The dramatization focused on the ark, which represented "the presence of Yahweh, particularly in military undertakings."[21] God is the "war god who leads the holy wars of his people."[22] His victorious deeds in war, his tsidqot (Jg. 5:11), cause his enemies to perish while causing his friends to "be like the sun as he rises in his might" (Jg. 5:31).

The Exodus-Conquest is "the normal locus of holy warfare," and its ritual reenactment "appears as a basic ingredient of certain cultic traditions in old Israel."[23]

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[20]Harry M. Orlinsky, Understanding the Bible through History and Archaeology (New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1972), p. 222.

[21]Helmer Ringgren, Israelite Religion, trans. David E. Green (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1966), p. 48.

[22]Ibid., p. 46.

[23]Frank Moore Cross, Junior, "The Divine Warrior in Israel's Early Cult," Biblical Motifs, Alexander Altmann, editor (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1966), p. 25.

These historical reenactments gradually became fused with "mythopoeic motifs of the creator-king and cosmic warrior... The institution of kingship, and the inauguration of a temple in the Canaanite style in Israel, obviously gave an occasion for the radical mythologizing of the 'historical' festivals."[24] In time, "both historical and mythologically derived elements were interwoven, or blended in the cult."[25] The mighty acts of the amphictyony god merge into the mythopoeic divine "king and creator of cosmos by virtue of his victory over his enemy or enemies in a cosmogonic struggle."[26]

Deutero Isaiah appropriated much of the cultic language of early Israel, with its evocation of the cosmic creator-king and the Exodus-Conquest. The liturgy surrounding the procession of the ark seems especially influential to his poetry..."the procession of the Ark, with its immediate background in Davidic and Solomonic processions to the Jerusalem sanctuary, had a long prehistory in the cult and ritual warfare of old Israel."[27] Verses 7-10 of Ps. 24, a tenth century B. C. liturgical piece, has its origins in such a procession:

> Lift up your heads, O gates!
> and be lifted up, O ancient doors!
> that the King of glory may come in.
> Who is the King of glory?
> The Lord, strong and mighty,
> the Lord, mighty in battle!
> Lift up your heads, O gates!
> and be lifted up, O ancient doors!
> that the King of glory may come in.
> Who is this King of glory?
> The Lord of hosts, he is the King of glory!

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[24] Ibid., p. 28.

[25] Ibid., p. 19.

[26] Ibid., p. 11.

[27] Ibid., p. 24.

In Is. 40:3-5 we have what North claims "may even be reminiscent of pre-exilic festivals in which the Ark of 'the King of glory' was carried in procession to the temple."[28]

A voice cries:
"In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord,
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.
Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill be made low;
the uneven ground shall become level,
and the rough places a plain.
And the glory of the Lord shall be revealed,
and all flesh shall see it together,
for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

In Is. 51:9-10 we have a portrayal of the cosmogonic myth of the battle of creation fused with the historical Exodus:

Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the Lord;
awake, as in days of old,
the generations of long ago.
Was it not thou that didst cut Rahab in pieces,
that didst pierce the dragon?
Was it not thou that didst dry up the sea,
the waters of the great deep;
that didst make the depths of the sea a way
for the redeemed to pass over?

Is. 42:10-13 presents a "new song" for the second exodus and conquest, probably patterned after songs from the ritual conquest and/or from the procession of the ark to Zion:

Sing to the Lord a new song,
his praise from the end of the earth!
Let the sea roar and all that fills it,
the coastlands and their inhabitants.
Let the desert and its cities lift up their voice,
the villages that Kedar inhabits;
let the inhabitants of Sela sing for joy,
let them shout from the top of the mountains.
Let them give glory to the Lord,
and declare his praise in the coastlands.
The Lord goes forth like a mighty man,

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[28]North, op. cit., p. 75.

like a man of war he stirs up his fury;
he cries out, he shouts aloud,
he shows himself mighty against his foes.

This final verse stings the sensibilities of North, who writes that "Our instinct is to say that such passages are out of place in Holy Scripture...Before we say that, we should look at the sequel...it will either be outgrown and give place to abstract monotheism, or it will find its culmination in the doctrine of Incarnation." North then hearkens to Browning's poetry as "saying what the Hebrew prophet said long ago":

Ithink this is the authentic sign and seal
Of Godship; that it ever waxes glad,
And more glad, until gladness blossoms, bursts,
Into a rage to suffer for mankind.[29]

This attempt to temper Deutero Isaiah's piercing words with the poetry of Browning, obscures the prophet's poetry and purpose. His poetry is permeated with the cultic language of holy war and images of the divine warrior-king; his purpose is to encourage the people by evoking Yahweh's omnipotent, mighty acts of war (tsidqot). The tendency to dilute such passages is stimulated by persistent readings of Deutero Isaiah's words in the light of post-biblical theological connotations. A word like yeshu'a, for example, loses its connection with the evocative image of the rescue of Israel in battle when it is instead connected with a theologically saturated "salvation." Another example is the word go'el, which is usually translated as "redeemer." The theological overtones of the English word loosens go'el from the image of blood revenge as we find it in Is. 47:3-4 (our translation):

Revenge I will take, and will favor no man.
Our avenger (go'elnu) is called Yahweh of Armies,
the Holy One of Israel.

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[29]North, op. cit., p. 116.

This is not to say that yeshu'a always relates to Israel in war, or that go'el inevitably means blood revenge. It is, however, unfortunate that Christian and Jewish scholars have abstractly categorized these words as "salvation vocabulary," and have insisted on treating them ethereally. With tongue in cheek, we note Homer's gratitude that his poetry was inherited by the "abstract" Greek tradition, instead of the "concrete" Hebraic-Christian tradition.

Hypostasis as a Factor

In the Assyro-Babylonian solar cult, the god Shamash produced an offspring who personified justice: Kittu (from the Akkadian root for "justice"). Evidence indicates "that the veneration of the sun god was not indigenous to Sumer and Akkad, but that it was brought into these regions by Western Semites."[30] The Amorite (or Western Semite) equivalent of the Akkadian Kittu was Tsaduq, which was also "the deified attribute of the sun god."[31] In the Old Babylonian period there was a king named Ammi-tsaduqa; according to the Babylonian King List, this name was understood in Akkadian to mean "the Divine Kinsman is the Justice."[32]

Given this Western Semitic background, it is not surprising that in traditions concerning the related people of Canaanite Jerusalem, there appear personal names with tsedeq as a prominent theophoric element. In Gen. 14:18, for example, there is Malki-tsedeq, king of Shalem. In Jos. 10:1, Joshua wars with a king of Jerusalem named Adoni-tsedeq. In Jg. 1:6, a king is called Adoni-bezeq, which

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[30]Roy A. Rosenberg, "The God Sedeq," Hebrew Union College Annual, XXXVI (1965), p. 162.

[31]Ibid., p. 164.

[32]Ibid., p. 165.

should probably be emended to Adoni-tsedeq.

Within the solar cult of Canaanite Jerusalem, tsedeq was "the beneficient manifestation of the sun god, the 'judge'...who brought hidden crimes to light and righted the wrongs done to the innocent."[33] When Jerusalem later became the center of the Yahweh cult, it was only natural that the indigenous deities "merged into his person. Quite logically the name Tsedeq, with its implications of 'righteousness, justice and propriety,' came to be applied to that attribute of Yahweh that represented these qualities."[34] In Jerusalem, the solar cult persisted into Judean times (cf. II Kg. 23:11), and the association of tsedeq and the solar god was remembered even in later prophetic literature: "But for you who fear my name the sun of righteousness shall rise, with healing in its wings" (Mal. 4:2).

The several instances in which Yahweh and tsedeq are found in a parallel relation include Ps. 4:6, "Sacrifice sacrifices of tsedeq and trust in Yahweh"; Ps. 17:1, "Hear Yahweh tsedeq; Is. 51:1, "Hear me, you who pursue tsedeq, you who seek Yahweh." In most of these cases we are probably dealing with a mere "stylistic device, a substitute for the divine name and God's activity. Occasionally, however, the abstract concept becomes semi-autonomous, appearing as an almost independent entity, half personified."[35]

Tsedeq sometimes appears in conjunction with a component part of Yahweh, viz., his right arm or hand (cf. Ps. 48:10; Is. 41:10); this parallels the Assyro-Babylonian idea of Kittu as "the minister of the right hand" of Shamash. Yahweh's "arm" or "right hand" was that part of him which

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[33]Ibid., p. 164.

[34]Ibid., p. 170.

[35]Ringgren, op. cit., p. 309.

"came to be credited with the deeds that, in Canaanite mythology, were performed by the gods of the old pantheon" (cf. Is. 51:9-10).[36] In Is. 59:16, the vengeance of Yahweh is supported by his "arm" and his tsdaqah. That tsdaqah here suggests wrathful vengeance is confirmed by the doublet in Is. 63:5 where chemah replaces tsdaqah. To Israel, Yahweh's attribute tsedeq appears in a saving role; to Israel's enemies, tsedeq appears as Yahweh's war-like vengeance: "He put on tsdaqah as a breastplate...garments of vengeance for clothing" (Is. 59:17). It would seem that the tsedeq of Yahweh is often a form of hypostasis as defined by Mowinckel: "a divine entity partly independent, partly a manifestation of a superior divinity, it represents the personification of a quality or an activity or a component part of the superior deity."[37]

We are convinced that hypostasis is a factor in Deutero Isaiah's use of the word tsedeq; recognition of hypostasis as a formative mythopoeic element in his usage is often an aid in understanding the prophet's employment of the term. Nevertheless, it is most likely a mere poetic "personification of a quality or an activity." We would suggest that the personification of tsedeq is sardonically promoted by Deutero Isaiah as the Israelite counterpart of the Babylonian deity Kittu.

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[36]Rosenberg, op. cit., p. 170.

[37]S. Mowinckel, Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart, 2nd edition, col. 2065, cited by Edmond Jacob, Theology of the Old Testament, trans. Arthur W. Heathcote and Philip J. Allcock (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1958), p. 84.

CHAPTER III

THE WORD TSEDEQ IN DEUTERO ISAIAH

Is. 41:2, mi he'ir mimizrach tsedeq yikra'ehu l'raglo. Who stirred up one from the east whom victory meets at every step?

Here tsedeq is usually read with the second stich, making it the subject of yikra'ehu. But Charles C. Torrey places tsedeq in the first stich, emending it as tsadiq and reading "Who aroused from the east a righteous one?"[1] While answering the need for a direct object in the same clause for the verb he'ir, Torrey's reading leaves us with an awkward 4:2 meter in an otherwise 3:3 composition. But if we accept the Dead Sea Scroll's conjunctive vav prefix of yikra'ehu, then Torrey's reading gains some credence. Torrey also claims that "meets at every step" is an "indefensible rendering" of both the verb and the noun.[2] He renders yikra'ehu l'raglo as "summoning him to his service."[3] If we accept Torrey's reading, while rejecting his tsadiq emendation, then we might view tsedeq here as a hypostasis of Yahweh, and read the distich as follows: "Who aroused Tsedeq from the east, summoning him to his service." Here tsedeq is appropriately related to the east, i.e., the rising sun (cf. Mal. 4:2); tsedeq is summoned by Yahweh to act as his vengeful "right hand," his yemin tsedeq (cf. 41:10). Still, metrical considerations make such a reading difficult to accept.

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[1]Charles Cutler Torrey, The Second Isaiah (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1928), p. 311.

[2]Ibid., pp. 313-14.

[3]Ibid., p. 228.

In place of our hypothetical hypostatization, scholarly consensus affirms Cyrus as the "one from the east." This assumption is founded on ch. 45 where Cyrus is specifically mentioned in the first verse, and is supposedly referred to in vs. 13: "I have aroused him in righteousness and I will make straight all his ways." Snaith claims that this assumption is false, and that the "one from the east" called by Yahweh "is exiled Israel, returning as conqueror."[4] This view is supported by the subsequent verses where "servant" Israel's victories through Yahweh are portrayed in militant, exultant terms, reminiscent of a cultic battle song of encouragement to warriors.

Many ancient and medieval Jewish authorities, including Rashi, considered Abraham as the "one from the east." Torrey also believes this to be so.[5] Abraham is specifically named in 41:8. In 51:1-2, Abraham is also named following a verse that begins "Hearken to me, you who pursue deliverance" (tsedeq).

North, agreeing with the Massoretic division, reads tsedeq in the second stich, and says that "victory" here is "as near to a personification of victory as Hebrew monotheism could ever get."[6] If we view tsedeq here as a hypostasis of Yahweh, and also place it in the second stich, we might translate the entire verse as follows:

> Who alerted one from the east,
> Tsedeq summons him to follow,
> giving up nations before him,

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[4]Norman H. Snaith, "The Servant of the Lord in Deutero Isaiah," Studies in Old Testament Prophecy, H. H. Rowley, editor (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1950), p. 192.

[5]Torrey, op. cit., p. 310.

[6]Christopher R. North, The Second Isaiah (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), p. 93.

prostrating kings (beneath him)
his sword will make them as dust,
his bow like driven stubble.

By our interpolation of tachtav ("beneath him"),[7] and by reading (after the Dead Sea Scroll) the difficult yrd as yorid ("to make prostrate"), we have gained a smooth 3:3 meter throughout the verse. Tsedeq, as a hypostasis of Yahweh, would seem here to be the vanguard of the returning Israelites. Yet another possibility, is to substitute the tsedeq of our translation with Torrey's tsadiq emendation; it might then be understood as a divine appellation meaning "Righteous One" or "Victorious One."

Is. 41:10, imatsticha af azarticha af t'machticha biymin tsidqi.

I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my victorious right hand.

Concerning the verse preceding 41:10, James Muilenburg writes that since Israel is chosen "in an election of grace...she not only need not be overcome by fear as the nations are...but is to be equipped to perform her mission in the earth."[8] He thus interprets tsedeq in these passages as "something that has been brought to a successful completion, which has fulfilled its true end."[9] George A. F. Knight writes that the "saving right hand" in 41:10 indicates "God's essence" which "is to save."[10] Blank believes that the tsedeq in these passages means God's "sure

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[7]Cf. North, ibid., p. 92.

[8]James Muilenburg, "Isaiah, Chapters 40-66," The Interpreter's Bible, George Arthur Buttrick, editor (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1956), V, 455.

[9]Ibid., V, 449.

[10]George A. F. Knight, Deutero-Isaiah (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1965), p. 55.

purpose," the goal of which is Israel's mission of peace.[11] While these interpretations are perhaps true to a degree, one senses an effort to dilute Deutero Isaiah's vigorous songs for victory into theologically compatible hymns.

Even a casual perusal of the passages surrounding 41:10 shows that we are here encountering Israel's militant, triumphant march to victory, aided by an avenging Yahweh's "victorious right hand" (lit. "the right hand of my tsedeq"). There is nothing here to indicate that "Israel's mission is peace."[12] "I will help you, says the Lord; your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel" (vs. 14). Go'alekha here means "your blood avenger," and not simply "your Redeemer" (in the sense of gracious reinstatement). This is clear from the preceding passages expressing Yahweh's aid in vanquishing Israel's enemies, and by the subsequent passages portraying the transformation of Israel into a "threshing sledge" that will slash through any obstacle impeding her victorious return. In vs. 16, Israel will become boastful through the omnipotence of her warrior Yahweh (the hithpa'el form of the verb here denotes proud boasting; the RSV rendering of hithalal as "you shall glory" is arid).

It is interesting to note that Deutero Isaiah expresses his certainty in the efficacy of Yahweh's right hand of tsedeq by using the preceding verbs in the perfectum propheticum, describing the future event as if it had already been accomplished.[13]

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[11]Sheldon H. Blank, Prophetic Faith in Isaiah (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1958), p. 154.

[12]Ibid., p. 157.

[13]Gesenius-Kautzsch, Hebrew Grammar, 2nd English edition, trans. A. E. Cowley (London: Oxford University Press, 1910), pp. 312-13.

We admit the appropriateness of the RSV translation of yemin tsidqi as "my victorious right hand"; we would point out, however, that Deutero Isaiah here enlists elements of a cultic battle song which probably includes a hypostasis of Yahweh, viz., a part of Yahweh's body which became associated with his mighty deeds, especially in war. In Is. 59:15-19 we have another battle song depicting Yahweh's "arm" as the cause of "victory" (yesh'a). The synonymous parallel asserts that Yahweh's tsdaqah supported him.

Is. 42:6, ani yhwh qraticha b'tsedeq.
I am the Lord, I have called you in righteousness.

Knight claims that tsedeq here has a "soteriological emphasis," and that it relates to "God's mission through the Spirit to the world."[14] North translates b'tsedeq as "for a saving purpose," the purpose being "salvation" to the heathen nations.[15] Muilenburg also claims that tsedeq here means "purpose" as mediated through servant Israel's universal mission: "God's gracious purpose for the nations of the world is embodied in Israel."[16] Such interpretations are the fruits of theological eisegesis, not scholarly exegesis; we must agree with Orlinsky that "It is interesting how the utterly nationalistic statements of our prophet are diluted and 'extended' in order to make them express internationalism and to support Israel's alleged mission to the world."[17] The fact that our verse is connected with

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[14]Knight, op. cit., p. 75.

[15]North, op. cit., pp. 111-12.

[16]Muilenburg, op. cit., V, 468-69.

[17]Harry M. Orlinsky, "The So-Called 'Servant of the Lord' and 'Suffering Servant' in Second Isaiah," Supplements to Vetus Testamentum, Vol. XIV (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1967), p. 44.

one of the so-called Servant-songs has inspired the transformation of tsedeq into soteriological purpose. Translating tsedeq as "victory" or "triumph" is not here considered congenial to Israel's function as "a light to the nations."

In 42:1, servant Israel "will bring forth justice to the nations." Muilenburg states that Deutero Isaiah "thinks of the servant as the mediator of judgment and justice in its highest sense."[18] We contend that mishpat ("judgement") here denotes a judgement against the nations---the imminent crushing of the oppressors. While commentators often point out that tsedeq is synonymous in Deutero Isaiah with yeshu'a ("salvation"), they tend to ignore the fact that in the language of holy war, moshi'a ("savior") and shofet ("judge") are interchangeable. The charismatic military leaders in the book of Judges "were originally called moshi'im, saviors; the extension of the title shophetim to these...personalities was made under the influence of the royal regime, the king being the supreme judge of the nation."[19] In Judges 3:10, Othniel judges Israel; this means, according to the preceding verse, that he saved Israel in war.[20] To bring judgement to the nations (42:1) means to defeat them in battle. This is underscored by the battle song in vss. 10-13 where "all the coastlands and their inhabitants" shall witness Yahweh's frenzy in war (cf. Ps. 9 where both the language of holy war and the language of the royal cult are fused;

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[18]Muilenburg, op. cit., V, 465.

[19]Edmond Jacob, Theology of the Old Testament, trans. Arthur W. Heathcote and Philip J. Allcock (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1958), p. 96 n.

[20]Ludwig Kohler, Old Testament Theology, trans. A. S. Todd (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1957), p. 33.

in this song of vengeance, an enthroned Yahweh acts as shofet tsedeq, saving his people while vanquishing their enemies).

Israel's alleged universal mission is encapsulated in the second distich of 42:6: "I have given you as a covenant to the people, a light to the nations." According to Muilenburg, "Israel is herself made the light which shines in the spiritual darkness of the surrounding world."[21] It is to be noticed that "a light to the nations" is in intimate syntactical connection with the next verse where the blinded eyes of those who sit in prison darkness are to be opened. Here Muilenburg expresses what has almost become axiomatic among scholars: "The release of the captives from prison is not to be taken as referring to liberation from exile but rather in a spiritual sense, a liberation of all the people from bondage."[22]

Snaith, on the other hand, asserts that Israel's salvation alone "is the only salvation in which the prophet is interested. The Servant will be a light to guide every Israelite home."[23] Orlinsky translates vs. 6 as follows:

> I the Lord have summoned you for triumph;
> I have grasped you by the hand,
> Have guarded you and made you
> A covenant of (a) people, a light of nations.[24]

Orlinsky's rendering of the construct l'or goyim is correct, and there is nothing here to indicate a "spiritual" liberation of all the peoples. The captives described in the following verse are clearly the Israelites, blinded by their prison's darkness; they are to receive light, wherever

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[21]Muilenburg, op. cit., V, 469.

[22]Op. cit., V, 469.

[23]Snaith, Studies in Old Testament Prophecy, p. 198.

[24]Orlinsky, Vetus Testamentum, p. 103.

they may be found, to guide them home. In vs. 16, the the blind captives will be guided back on a road they do not know, and the darkness before them will turn to light. Orlinsky claims that in Deutero Isaiah, "Foreign nations are but mentioned as peoples to be conquered...or as the instrument of Yhwh to deliver his people; or in a rhetorical manner of speaking, to be witness of Yhwh's glory."[25] In ch. 49:6, l'or goyim is again given so "that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth." The remainder of this chapter is quite explicit as to the prophet's attitude toward the other nations:

> Kings shall see and arise;
> princes they shall prostrate themselves (vs. 7).
>
> Behold, I will lift up my hand to the nations,
> and raise my signal to the peoples...
> With their faces to the ground
> they shall bow down to you,
> and lick the dust of your feet (vss. 22-23).
>
> I will make your oppressors eat their own flesh,
> and they shall be drunk with their own blood as
> with wine.
> Then all flesh shall know that I am the Lord
> your Savior and your Redeemer
> the Mighty One of Jacob (vs. 26).

Regarding these passages, Torrey---while assuming a universal mission in Deutero Isaiah's message---assures us that "the poet would have been horrified by the thought that any one could take his words here as a literal prediction or wish."[26] We believe that the prophet would not "have been horrified by the thought," while many commentators understandably are so horrified.

In Is. 62:1-2 we have another passage where tsedeq is intimately related to nations and light:

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[25] Op. cit., p. 44.

[26] Torrey, op. cit., p. 388.

> For Zion's sake I will not keep silent,
> and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest
> until her vindication goes forth as brightness,
> and her salvation as a burning torch.
> The nations shall see your vindication,
> and all the kings your glory.

The theme of ch. 62 is Israel's triumphant reunification with her land—a land where enemies shall not eat and "foreigners shall not drink" (it should be noted that tsedeq, yeshu'a, and kavod, respectively translated as "vindication," "salvation," and "glory," are very close to being personifications in 62:1-2). In ch. 42:6, tsedeq is also connected to nations and light; here it also has to do with Israel's "vindication," i.e., her victory over the nations and her triumphant return to Zion following the darkness of captivity.

Tsedeq rendered as "righteousness," is here sometimes assumed to denote that it is not Israel's own merit that brings about salvation, but God's own gracious purpose, which desires Israel's mediation for world-wide salvation. From the preceding examination we conclude that—regardless of questions concerning Israel's merit—this theologically informed assumption is vacuous.

> Is. 42:21, yhwh chafets l'ma'an tsidqo yagdil torah veya'dir.
> The Lord was pleased, for his righteousness' sake, to magnify his law and make it glorious.

In ch. 42:14-25, Yahweh is shown as no longer able to bear the oppressed status of his people; he will no longer restrain himself, but will "cry out like a woman in travail," and free the captives while laying waste to the foreign nations. Beginning with vs. 18, Yahweh addresses his servant Israel, who is blinded and deafened by captivity. To this people Yahweh had given his magnificent torah, but

now Israel is "a people robbed and plundered...trapped in holes...a prey with none to rescue." But since it was Yahweh himself who relinquished "Jacob to the spoiler" because of the people's failure to follow the law, it is also Yahweh who can rescue his people.

Although the style and language of vs. 21 belongs to Deutero Isaiah, "many scholars...reject the verse in its entirety."[27] For some scholars, Deutero Isaiah must remain oblivious to the "law" for the sake of an alleged universal salvation. Those scholars who accept the authenticity of the verse, often feel the need to qualify its position here: "What gives content to these 'times' is law and grace," writes Muilenburg, "but it is grace, not law, that has the final word."[28] Torrey claims that torah here means "the true religion...which was to be 'the light to the nations'...Of the Hebrew Pentateuch or any part of it, the poet can hardly have thought here."[29] North agrees: "This can hardly be...'The Law' (of Moses), i.e. the Pentateuch."[30] Such disclaimers ignore the continuity between vs. 21 and vs. 24, where we have passages on walking in Yahweh's ways and obeying his torah. Such phraseology is intimately related to the terms chokim ("ordinances"), mitsvot ("commandments"), and mishpatim ("statutes") as we find them in the Deuteronomic and prophetic literature at large (cf. Dt. 26:17; II Kg. 17:13; Ezek. 18:9). North recognizes this relationship, but says that since they "are Deuteronomic in tone," they must be the work of a later redactor.[31]

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[27]Muilenburg, op. cit., V, 477.

[28]Op. cit., V, 479.

[29]Torrey, op. cit., p. 332.

[30]North, op. cit., p. 118.

[31]Op. cit., p. 118.

Does North believe that only the Deuteronomists used this phraseology? Would he claim that wherever such phraseology appears in the prophetic literature, it is the product of later Deuteronomic redaction? Would he assert that Deutero Isaiah was ignorant of such phraseology? North himself writes elsewhere that "No one...supposes that everything in the Old Testament which bears strong marks of 'Deuteronomic' style is therefore by the author of Deuteronomy, nor even that Deuteronomy is all from one hand."[32] When Deutero Isaiah writes in 51:7 "the people in whose heart is my law," North does not say that this is a Deuteronomic redaction (cf. Dt. 11:18; 26:16), but that "the language recalls that of the New Covenant" as found in Jeremiah and Ezekiel.[33] North feels safe here; the law has supposedly been spiritualized, and any stylistic connection with the Deuteronomists can be ignored.

The idea that Deutero Isaiah is not concerned with Mosaic law is absurd; it is an attempt to view the prophet as the perpetrator of a radically new message of universal salvation, a message inimical to the particularism of Mosaic law. If Deutero Isaiah does not often mention anything specific concerning Mosaic law, it is simply because his message presupposes compliance with this law among the majority of those he addresses. When he does mention the law (e.g., 42:24; 48:18), it is to remind the exiles—as did Jeremiah and Ezekiel—that they are in exile because they transgressed these laws, and not because of Yahweh's impotence. To think that Deutero Isaiah, whose poetry was probably read in synagogues and in nationalistic circles,

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[32]Christopher R. North, The Suffering Servant in Deutero-Isaiah (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), p. 178.

[33]North, The Second Isaiah, p. 211.

was not interested in the traditional law, is absurd. The community during the Babylonian Exile was

> marked by adherence to traditional law. Heightened stress on law is understandable among the exiles, for now that nation and cult had ended there was little to mark them Jews. Moreover, since the prophets had explained the calamity as a punishment for the breach of covenant law, it is scarcely remarkable that sincere men should have felt a more earnest attention to this feature of their religion...Strict observance... became increasingly the mark of a loyal Jew.[34]

The "righteous" man (tsadiq) observed the laws and thus became "victorious" (tsadiq); Yahweh had revealed these laws for the sake of his own powerful attribute of "justice" (tsidqo).

> Is. 41:26, mi higid merosh veneda'h umil'fanim veno'mar tsadiq.
>
> Who declared it from the beginning, that we might know, and beforetime, that we might say, "He is right"?

Is. 41:25 seems to support contentions that Cyrus is not the "one" referred to in 41:2. Here the one "stirred up" shall call on Yahweh's name. Yet for Deutero Isaiah, Cyrus is merely the unwitting trigger of Israel's return; Cyrus does not know Yahweh (cf. 45:4). Muilenburg's statement that "though he does not know him, he will yet come to acknowledge him as the one true God" is unconvincing.[35] Deutero Isaiah is only concerned here with Yahweh's omnipotence, the inability of other gods to contend with him, the destruction of kings, and the return of Israel to Zion.

By reading tsadiq as tsedeq (with the Dead Sea Scroll), an argument—based on the preceding verse—could be constructed for understanding 41:26 as an acclamation for

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[34]John Bright, A History of Israel (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1959), pp. 349-50.

[35]Muilenburg, op. cit., V, 462.

Yahweh's hypostasis, tsedeq. Such an argument would seem to be obviated by the image of legal proceedings evoked in vs. 21 where we have in synonymous parallelism, "Set forth your case...bring your proofs." The word tsadiq seems to connect with this image, pronouncing Yahweh as the winner of the case. But the portrayal of a trial here is not quite so obvious as many assume. The Hebrew word rendered as "case" is riv, which can simply mean "quarrelsome adversary." The Hebrew word translated as "proofs" is atsumot, which simply means "strong ones."

Nevertheless, it seems clear that Yahweh is challenging the gods of other nations to match his omnipotence. It is appropriate, then, that observers of this match declare Yahweh "tsadiq." It is not unlikely that in ancient Israel, the victor in either a legal trial or a match of skill or strength was acclaimed by the cry "tsadiq!"

Is. 43:9, yitnu edayhem v'yitsd'qu.
Let them bring their witnesses to justify them.

In 43:1-7, Yahweh calls forth the exiles to return, boasting of his power to protect them. They are "dearer" to him "than other peoples,"[36] according to the metaphorical image in vs. 3, and he will gather them "from the end of the earth" (vs. 6). Though they have been blinded and deafened by captivity, the Israelites can still see and hear (vs. 8): "They have been witness to events of the past, and they are still a witness to these events."[37] They are called upon now to witness the discomfiture of the false gods who are challenged in legal parlance by Yahweh to

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[36]Torrey, op. cit., p. 334.
[37]Muilenburg, op. cit., V, 486.

bring forth their own witnesses to deeds equal to those of Yahweh. If these gods are true gods, let the witnesses to their mighty deeds justify them. The word emet ("true") in the subsequent stich confirms that we are dealing here with the language of juristic oaths.[38]

Is. 43:26, saper atah l'me'an titsdaq.
Set forth your case, that you may be proved right.

The preceding "strophe" (vss. 22-24) is, according to Muilenburg, an indictment against "Israel as she really is," preparing us for "the grace of God" that "transcends the deserved judgement."[39] In the next "strophe" (vss. 25-28), continues Muilenburg, "emphasis falls on the phrase for my own sake." This shows that by "God's grace alone is Israel forgiven."[40]

A careful reading of vss. 22-28 shows us that Deutero Isaiah is not depicting "Israel as she really is," but how she was in pre-exilic times[41] (the conjunction---RSV "yet"---before the negative in vs. 22 should be omitted as an interpolation made on the assumption that the chapter is all of one piece[42]). Yahweh portrays Israel's past transgressions in order to show why he "delivered Jacob to utter destruction" (vs. 28). But now that Israel has suffered more than she deserved (cf. 40:2; 47:6), Yahweh is willing to forget the past for the sake of his own reputation. In Is. 48:11, we have: "For my own sake, for my own sake, I do

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[38]Cf. North, The Second Isaiah, p. 176.
[39]Muilenburg, op. cit., V, 497.
[40]Op. cit., V, 499-500.
[41]Snaith, Studies in Old Testament Prophecy, pp. 195-96.
[42]Torrey, op. cit., p. 342.

it, for how should my name be profaned?" The emphasis is not on "grace" in any post-biblical sense, but on Yahweh's maligned reputation and fame. It was not from impotence that Yahweh allowed his people to fall into captivity, but because of their own past sins. With a certain largesse, Yahweh is saying here that "If there are those who think that I acted unjustly, let us retrace the past together, appraise what took place, and see if any accusation of injustice on my part may be proven correct."

> Is. 45:8, har'ifu shamayim mima'al u'schaqim yizlu tsedeq tiftach eretz v'yifru yesh'a utsdaqah tatsmiach yachad.
>
> Shower, O heavens, from above, and let the skies rain down righteousness; let the earth open, that salvation may sprout forth, and let it cause righteousness to spring up also.

Concerning this passage Muilenburg writes, "The gifts of salvation are universal...and the heavens and the earth respond in joy and gladness to the universal redemption."[43] This interpretation is based, according to Muilenburg, on the preceding verses where Cyrus will act as an unwitting agent of Yahweh's omnipotence—an omnipotence that will cause men from east to west to acknowledge that there is no other god. But do the "men...from the rising of the sun and from the west" (vs. 6) signify any people other than the Israelites? The Hebrew text does not say "that men may know," but simply l'ma'an yed'u ("that they may know"); the "they" referred to is found in vs. 4: "for the sake of (l'ma'an) my servant Jacob, and Israel my chosen," who will be gathered from the east and from the west (cf. 43:5).

Our verse is a lyrical outburst of joy over the imminent triumphant return of the Israelites. The poet has

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[43]Muilenburg, op. cit., V, 525.

chosen a sensual metaphor reminiscent of the Canaanite fertility cult; Yahweh's attribute, tsedeq, will mate with earth. The "womb" of earth will open, and tsdaqah and yesh'a will "sprout forth." These two terms are often employed by Deutero Isaiah in synonymous parallelisms, and together usually signify "victory" or "deliverance," as in war. Torrey claims that tsedeq and yesh'a "here as everywhere else in Second Isaiah, are spiritual blessings."[44] North, while emphasizing a sublimation "into what is now pure metaphor," recognizes the "erotic associations in Baal religion." He also recognizes "womb" as the natural object of tiftach.[45]

It is not surprising that tsedeq rains down here, for the word's mythopoeic background as the name of a solar god caused it to be associated with rain.[46] This is possibly the background behind the word's use in Hos. 10:12: "for it is time to seek the Lord, that he may come and rain salvation (tsedeq) upon you."

Both the masculine (tsedeq) and feminine (tsdaqah) forms of the noun are used in our passage. Some scholars have attempted to see the masculine form as the norm of God's activity, and the feminine form as the visible manifestation of this activity on earth.[47] At least as far as Deutero Isaiah is concerned, we must agree with North that there "is no definable difference" between the forms.[48]

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[44]Torrey, op. cit., p. 359.

[45]North, The Second Isaiah, pp. 151-52.

[46]Roy A. Rosenberg, "The God Sedeq," Hebrew Union College Annual, XXXVI (1965), p. 173.

[47]Cf. Jacob, op. cit., p. 98.

[48]North, The Second Isaiah, p. 152.

Is. 45:13 anochi ha'irotihu b'tsedeq.
I have aroused him in righteousness.

Scholars generally assume that Cyrus is the one "aroused" here. The assumption stems from 44:28 and 45:1 where Cyrus is specifically named and described as a "shephard" and as Yahweh's "annointed." He is called upon to "subdue the nations" as a catalyst for Israel's release from captivity.

Torrey, on the other hand, claims that 44:28 is a later interpolation; concerning the mention of Cyrus in 45:1, Torrey writes: "There is no more palpable gloss than this in all the Old Testament. Context, meter, and historical fact all exclude it."[49] While the meter in 45:1 is indeed awkward, Torrey's assertion seems somewhat exaggerated. Torrey believes that the Cyrus "interpolations" were inspired by the affinity between 45:13 and the Cyrus account in the first chapter of Ezra.[50] But if we are dealing with interpolations influenced by the Chronicler's account, why do we not find Cyrus named--aside from these two times--anywhere else in chs. 40-55? Why is the name withheld, for example, from 41:2? Why should we not also assume that 41:2 and 45:13 (both reminiscent of Ezra 1:1) are interpolations? Why should we suppose an interpolation influenced by the Chronicler, instead of assuming that the Chronicler connected the existent Cyrus passages with 41:2 and 45:13 (just as many scholars have done ever since then), and thus arrived at the expression he'ir yhwh et ruach koresh (Ezra 1:1)?

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[49]Torrey, op. cit., p. 357.

[50]Op. cit., p. 360.

We, on the other hand, believe that the naming of Cyrus in 45:1 is from the hand of our poet, and that 45:1-13 (excluding vs. 8) forms a single poem. That "Cyrus" is not an interpolation is supported by the "though you do not know" passages (vss. 4-5). Moreover, it is supported by the primary purpose of the poem. We suggest that Deutero Isaiah composed this poem after realizing the inevitability of Cyrus' conquest of Babylon. The prophet set about explaining Cyrus as an instrument of Yahweh. The Israelites viewed the anticipated return in terms of the Exodus of their tradition. Deutero Isaiah wished to communicate the idea that although the new exodus might be set in motion by a non-Israelite conqueror, it is still Yahweh's work. Yahweh created man and all the earth; was he not, therefore, in control of what he had created? Could he not command a foreign ruler to act as his agent? Will Israel question the means Yahweh employs in order to initiate her release?

Cyrus has been aroused in order to trigger Israel's triumph. He has been aroused b'tsedeq, for the ultimate victory of Israel. Deutero Isaiah enlisted a similar language in 41:2 and in 42:6, but this does not demonstrate conclusively that Cyrus is indicated in those passages (in 42:6 Cyrus is certainly not implied).

Yahweh here arouses Cyrus "by means of" (b-) tsedeq, tsedeq being the attribute of Yahweh associated with the just and victorious deliverance of Israel. The role of Cyrus is clearly dependent on Yahweh's own tsedeq.

Is. 45:19, ani yhwh dover tsedeq magid me'sharim.
I the Lord speak the truth, I declare what is right.

Muilenburg labels 45:14-25 "The Conversion of the Nations." He warns us against "literalistic interpretations" which must be "cast aside" in order to appreciate the

eschatological "horizons" viewed by our prophet.[51] We would, in turn, warn against casting aside what the prophet writes for the sake of post-biblical interpretations.

Verses 14-17 present a portrait of wealthy and proud nations paying subservient material tribute to Israel while confirming that God is only with Israel, and will protect her forever. Throughout the poem, Israel's God is depicted as a god of militant victory and deliverance, a god who will subject the nations while bringing to Israel triumph and cause for boasting. The RSV "turn to me and be saved, all the ends of the earth" (vs. 22) does not mean the non-Israelites, but the gathering of the exiles (cf. 43:5-6). The RSV "every knee shall bow" (vs. 23) is not a sign of worship, but of abject subservience (cf. vs. 14). The yev'shu in vs. 24 does not signify repentant shame (RSV "ashamed") on the part of the nations, but that they shall be shamed by Yahweh's victories over them, on behalf of Israel. Torrey's "come in abasement" is an appropriate translation.[52]

In 45:19 we have dover tsedeq (RSV "speak the truth"). In order to see this phrase in its proper perspective, we turn to 63:1-6 where we have a song of Yahweh's vengeance. Here Yahweh is portrayed as returning from his gruesome mission of revenge against Israel's enemies. His garments are dripping with the blood of his trampled opponents. Answering a rhetorical question concerning his identity, Yahweh says "It is I, announcing vindication (m'daber bi-tsdaqah), mighty to save." The translation of tsedeq as "truth" in this verse, is influenced by the appearance of me'sharim (RSV "right") in the subsequent stich. But yashar

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[51]Muilenburg, op. cit., V, 528.

[52]Torrey, op. cit., p. 240.

(the root, usually meaning "straight"), might also be understood here as signifying that which is undeviating. The plural form me'sharim is a "plural of amplification" designed to intensify the idea of the root,[53] so we might posit the word as expressing a sense of Yahweh's inflexibility on Israel's behalf; Yahweh is announcing here that his design to avenge Israel inexorable. Our interpretation makes even better sense if we read the RSV "chaos" preceding our distich as "for nothing" (an "example of a common Semitic accusative," according to Torrey[54]).

Is. 45:21, el tsadiq umoshi'a a'in zulati.
A righteous God and a Savior; there is none besides me.

Muilenburg correctly recognizes that the association of tsedeq here with "salvation" suggests that the former signifies "victory" or "deliverance."[55] Translating the term moshi'a as "Savior," however, tends to emasculate the phrase with post-biblical theological overtones (cf. our analysis of 42:6 above, pp. 38-39). Both predicates here depict Yahweh as victorious in battle, and able to rescue Israel from the hands of her enemies. Knight's rendering of tsadiq in this verse as "creative goodness" is flaccid.[56]

Is. 45:23, yatsa mipi tsdaqah davar v'lo yashuv.
From my mouth has gone forth in righteousness a word that shall not return.

Torrey emends davar v'lo to d'vari lo.[57] We further suggest emending the following verb yashuv to yeshev or to

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[53]Gesenius-Kautzsch, op. cit., p. 397.
[54]Torrey, op. cit., p. 362.
[55]Muilenburg, op. cit., V, 533.
[56]Knight, op. cit., p. 143.
[57]Torrey, op. cit., p. 362.

yishev (pi'el). This would render the meaning as "my word will not sit idly by." Yahweh's word, it should be remembered, is an agent of effective power.[58]

Tsdaqah is here portrayed as setting out from Yahweh's mouth in order to bring victory to the Israelites, while subjugating her enemies. In ancient Egypt, "justice" is ma'at, and the temple of ma'at is the king's mouth.[59] Just as we find that tsedeq is often used in an antithetical relationship with darkness or chaos (because of its mythopoeic connection with the solar cult), we also find that in the great battle reliefs of ancient Egypt, enemies are depicted as representatives of darkness and chaos, vanquished by the bright ma'at of the kings.[60] Regardless of the extent to which Israelite thought was or was not influenced by Egyptian mythology, the concrete personification of what modern men call "concepts" permeates the literature of the ancient Near East. That mythopoeic expressions reside in Deutero Isaiah's poetry should not surprise us, and we do well to heed Frankfort's words: "Even the great conception of an only and transcendent God was not entirely free from myth, for it was not the fruit of detached speculation, but of a passionate and dynamic experience."[61]

Is. 45:24, ach bayhwh li amar tsdaqot va'oz.

Only in the Lord, it shall be said of me, are righteousness and strength.

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[58]J. Lindblom, Prophecy in Ancient Israel (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1962), pp. 114-15.

[59]Henri Frankfort, et al., Before Philosophy (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1949), p. 22.

[60]Henri Frankfort, Ancient Egyptian Religion (New York: Harper & Row, 1948), pp. 55-56.

[61]Frankfort, Before Philosophy, p.244.

In accord with the Dead Sea Scroll, we would emend li amar to yeamer (niph'al), rendering the meaning as "it shall be said." We may take tsdaqot here as a plural of amplification, denoting Yahweh's mighty deeds in war (underscored by the correlative oz). We agree with Muilenburg that the meaning here is similar to that of the construct tsidqot as found in Jg. 5:11 and Mic. 6:5.[62] Knight indefatigably interprets this phrase as an expression of God's "compassionate, loving activity."[63]

Is. 45:25, bayhwh yitsd'qu v'yithal'lu kol zera yisrael.
In the Lord all the offspring of Israel shall triumph and glory.

Torrey acclaims 45:22 f. as "a grand utterance" of the prophet's "conception of the world's future" that shows he wrote "not for Jews only, but for all mankind."[64] Torrey is reticent concerning kol zera yisrael in vs. 25. We can only assume that he viewed it as obvious that his converted nations are now new Israelites.

We suggest that in vss. 22-25, Deutero Isaiah is enlisting early cultic language evocative of the Exodus-Conquest ritual. The final distich proclaims that all the seed of Israel shall be victorious (yitsd'qu)[65] and shall have cause to boast (yithal'lu). It is worth noting that the RSV translates tsedeq and its cognates as "righteous" or "righteousness" all through ch. 45 (excluding "truth" in vs. 19), but then suddenly—and more appropriately—decides

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[62]Muilenburg, op. cit., V, 534.
[63]Knight, op. cit., p. 146.
[64]Torrey, op. cit., p. 362.
[65]North, The Second Isaiah, p. 162.

to render yitsd'qu as "shall triumph" in vs. 25. Perhaps "shall be justified" would have been more consistent, and certainly no less insipid, than the preceding renditions.

> Is. 46:12-13, shim'u ela'i abiray lev harchoqim mitsdaqah: qeravti tsidqati lo tirchaq ut'shu'ati lo t'acher.
>
> Hearken to me, you stubborn of heart, you who are far from deliverance: I bring near my deliverance, it is not far off, and my salvation will not tarry.

In ch. 46 we have a poem of ridicule against the heathens who worship idols, closing with an announcement of their imminent defeat. But vss. 3-4 and vss. 12-13 are isolated pieces, each beginning with the cultic formula shim'u ela'i. Verses 3-4 expresses the paternal solicitude of Yahweh toward Israel, which insures her deliverance. Verses 12-13, militant in tone, relates the certainty of Israel's victory and glory.

Almost all commentators and translators insist on rendering the construct abiray lev as "stubborn of heart." This rendering is done in the light of vs. 8 where we have posh'im (RSV "transgressors"). Torrey directs us to Ezek. 3:7 and Mal. 3:13 for a comparison; but neither of these passages uses abiray lev.[66] Ezekiel, in fact, uses g'shay lev, a typical expression of recalcitrance (cf. the common g'shay 'oref in Ex. 32:9). In the song of vengeance in ch. 49 ("I will make your oppressors eat their own flesh"), Deutero Isaiah uses abir ya'kov ("the Mighty One of Jacob") as Yahweh's self-predication. He uses it again in 60:16 (cf. Gen. 49:24; Ps. 132:2 and 5). In Jer. 46:15 we see the term abir applied to warriors. In Is. 46:12, we should also understand abiray lev as denoting mighty or valiant

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[66]Torrey, op. cit., p. 367.

warriors. Many interpreters would have us believe that in order to express the recalcitrance of the Israelites, Deutero Isaiah enlisted a term that almost always expresses a sense of might in battle, a term the poet himself uses as a predication of Yahweh.

This piece, then (vss. 12-13), is reminiscent of a cultic battle song. Israel's mighty warriors are told that although they now seem far from "victory" (tsdaqah) over their enemies, Yahweh will yet bring forth victory ("my victory"—tsdaqah can be viewed here as a hypostasis of Yahweh).

> Is. 48:1, hanishba'im b'shem yhwh uve'lohay yisrael yazkiru lo veemet v'lo vitsdaqah.
>
> Who swear by the name of the Lord, and confess the God of Israel but not in truth or right.

Many scholars are perplexed by the passages of reproach against Israel in ch. 48. Snaith claims that they are not addressed to the exiles, but to the non-exiles still in Jerusalem: "They are the inhabitants of the city who were not deported...'the rebellious house' of Ezekiel; the 'bad figs' of Jeremiah...'the people of the land' of the Chronicler."[67] While Snaith's interpretation maintains some cogency, we feel that it is determined by his understanding of Deutero Isaiah as a nationalist, and not by the content of the verses involved.

Other scholars consider these passages as later interpolations, presenting "a kind of interlinear commentary in which Israel's past is strongly condemned."[68] This theory

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[67]Norman H. Snaith, "Isaiah 40-66," Supplements to Vetus Testamentum, Vol. XIV (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1967), p. 174.

[68]North, The Second Isaiah, p. 175.

is supported by both the inconsistency of content and by stylistic considerations. Some of the verses are almost certainly composite, including vss. 1-2. Nevertheless, we must view as suspect a theory which claims that more than half of the first eleven verses are interpolations.

If we understand these passages as referring to Israel's pre-exilic transgressions, then they are simply representative of several such passages in Deutero Isaiah, where the prophet emphasizes Israel's past sins in order to justify Yahweh's act of allowing her to fall captive (that the passages here are relating pre-exilic transgressions seems confirmed by vs. 18). But if we regard the passages in ch. 48 as alluding to exilic Israel, then we can probably understand them as being inspired by the opposition that the prophet's message encountered among those exiles who were satisfied with their present condition.

The words emet and tsdaqah together seem to be part of the usual language of oaths (cf. Jer. 4:2),[69] probably expressing a sense of sincerity, trustworthiness, and honor (cf. I Kg. 3:6). The verbs "swear by" and "confess" confirm that we are dealing here with formal cultic terms.[70]

> Is. 48:18, lu hiqshavta l'mitsvota'i vay'hi kanahar shlomaykha v'tsidqat'kha k'galay hayam.
>
> O that you had hearkened to my commandments! Then your peace would have been like a river, and your righteousness like the waves of the sea.

This verse should be understood as referring to pre-exilic Israel. The particle lu ("would that") is followed by a verb in the perfect tense. The contiguous second stich

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[69] Op. cit., p. 176.

[70] Muilenburg, op. cit., V, 554.

(we have a 3:3:3 meter here) begins with the imperfect y'hi prefixed with a vav (vav hahipukh). As such, the word should be understood as the syntactical equivalent of the perfect tense.

The word mitsvot ("commandments") is found primarily in the Deuteronomic literature, and is usually associated with the "statutes" and "ordinances" of the torah of Moses. When Deutero Isaiah refers to pre-exilic times, his language is often reminiscent of the Pentateuch, the Deuteronomic literature, and the pre-exilic prophets (cf. 42:21 and 24; 43:23-24; 48:4). We understand mitsvot to mean here virtually the same as it did to the Deuteronomists, viz., the particular commandments of traditional law. Muilenburg attempts to circumvent such an understanding by placing the word in the singular and interpreting it as "the commandment whereby her life in history was guided and directed." He then goes on to emphasize that Deutero Isaiah was not concerned with "what Israel deserves" but with "divine grace."[71]

There is an obvious affinity between our present verse and Am. 5:24: "let justice (mishpat) roll down like waters, and righteousness (tsdaqah) like an ever-flowing stream." For Amos, tsdaqah is associated with just and ethical actions. Accordingly, every time that Amos uses the noun tsdaqah, it is with mishpat in a synonymous parallelism. In the synonymous parallelism in Is. 48:18, tsdaqah is employed along with the noun shalom. Depending on the referents, the meaning of shalom can range from "health" and "peace" to "friendship" and "prosperity." We suggest that in our present verse, tsdaqah refers to victorious deeds, while shalom refers to a secure prosperity gained

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[71] Op. cit., V, 561-62.

from such deeds (the subjugation of enemies and the spoils accrued thereby). Spoils and tribute would have been Israel's, if she had followed the commandments. While "peace" or "prosperity" are appropriate translations of shalom here, our understanding of its meaning in connection with tsdaqah makes it worthwhile to glance at Is. 66:12-16. In these verses shalom is the outcome of Yahweh's wrath against Israel's enemies, and spoils flow into Israel like an "ever-flowing stream." There is also an obvious affinity between Is. 48:18 and Ps. 81:13-16:

> O that my people would listen to me,
> that Israel would walk in my ways!
> I would soon subdue their enemies,
> and turn my hand against their foes.
> Those who hate the Lord would cringe toward him,
> and their fate would last for ever.
> I would feed you with the finest of the wheat,
> and with honey from the rock I would satisfy you.

Unlike Amos, Deutero Isaiah seldom uses tsedeq as a marker for just or ethical acts in a mundane sense. This does not mean that we have a development from an ethical sense to an idea of "divine grace," but rather (if you will) a retrogression to an early cultic language wherein tsedeq was often associated with "victory" and "deliverance" in war; with the mighty deeds and judgements of Yahweh on Israel's behalf; as an attribute of the cosmic king and divine warrior.

> Is. 49:24, hayuqach migibor malqoach v'im shvi tsadiq yimalet.
>
> Can the prey be taken from the mighty, or the captives of a tyrant be rescued?

The Vulgate, the Peshitta Syriac, and the Dead Sea Scroll read--as in vs. 25--ari'ts ("tyrant" or "ruthless one") instead of tsadiq. The Septuagint accordingly reads adikos. Considering the similarity between the Hebrew

letters involved, the scribal error is readily understandable.

Is. 50:8, qarov matsdiqi mi yariv 'iti.

He who vindicates me is near. Who will contend with me?

Isaiah 50:4-9 is generally assumed by scholars to be one of the so-called Servant-songs (a minority would also include vss. 10-11). The word "servant" does not appear in vss. 4-9, but because of the gratuitous idea that Deutero Isaiah speaks of a "suffering servant"—a servant who suffers vicariously for the sins of others—the designation was considered appropriate. The density of post-biblical theological interpretations surrounding these verses makes it very difficult for the scholar qua scholar to approach them. How does one reply to Torrey's reading which views vss. 4-9 as a portrait of o dikaios in Acts 7:52?[72] North goes so far as to entitle vss. 4-9 "The Gethsemane of the Servant."[73] We can only agree with Orlinsky that "the Hebrew text of the sixth century B. C. is explained in the light of a twentieth century A. D. interpretation of a first century A. D. event!"[74]

We see no reason to isolate any of the passages in ch. 50. Our prophet is addressing those who feel they have been "sold out" by Yahweh (vs. 1); he is addressing those who doubt his joyous tidings of return and revenge (vss. 2-3); finally, he is addressing those Israelites who had become well established in Babylon, satisfied with their wealth and station in one of the great centers of world

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[72]Torrey, op. cit., p. 147.

[73]North, The Second Isaiah, p. 201.

[74]Orlinsky, Vetus Testamentum, p. 91.

culture (vs. 11).[75] The prophet complains of the tribulations he has endured (vs. 6) in his role as spokesman for Yahweh (vss. 4-5). His lament concerning his unsolicited obligation, and the tribulations that this obligation generates, is similar to the laments of his predecessors, from Moses to Elijah, from Amos to Jeremiah and Ezekiel.[76] There is no idea of vicarious suffering here. At the same time, our prophet expresses his certainty over the truth of his message; his "Vindicator" (matsdiq) is near, and the doubters and apostates "will wear out like a garment."

The language in vss. 8-9 is possibly that of the law-court, though this is not as certain as many scholars assume.[77] In any case, we should avoid calling the language "forensic" because of that term's theological connotations (e.g., "forensic justification" is "a kind of a acquittal or 'declaring just' that takes no account of the actual condition of the person so acquitted"[78]). The hiph'al form of the verb, hitsdiq (used only twice in Deutero Isaiah: 50:8; 53:11), is especially prone to the label "forensic" since—as a causative—it can be translated as "declared just" or "to make righteous." In the light of post-biblical theology, there is a vast difference between such translations, and simply rendering the hiph'al as "do justice" or "give judgement in favor of."

> Is. 51:1, shim'u ela'i rodfay tsedeq m'vaqshay yhwh.
> Hearken to me, you who pursue deliverance, you who seek the Lord.

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[75]Bright, op. cit., p. 363.

[76]Orlinsky, Vetus Testamentum, p. 90.

[77]North, The Second Isaiah, p. 203.

[78]John Macquarrie, Principles of Christian Theology (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1966), p. 343.

In ch. 51, the mythopoeic and holy war associations of the word tsedeq (it is used five times) are fused with more mundane associations (such as those found in Deuteronomy and Ezekiel). The expression rodfay tsedeq in 51:1 recalls Dt. 16:20 where we have tsedeq tsedeq tirdof (the RSV translation there is "Justice, and only justice, you shall follow") concluding a short section dealing with the proper administration of justice. Muilenburg ascertains the Deuteronomic relationship when he states that the word tsedeq "bears either an ethical or an eschatological meaning here."[79] But is it really a question of either/or? In ch. 51 Yahweh is portrayed as the omnipotent cosmogonic warrior (vs. 9); the "historical" origins of the Israelites (vs. 2) are coupled with its present captivity (vss. 19-20); Yahweh, the divine warrior, avenges his people (vss. 22-23). All these elements come together here, and it is only natural that our poet also utilizes expressions evocative of Israel's "revealed" law (transgression of Yahweh's torah sent her into exile, while present adherence to it perpetuates her existence). It should be noted that 51:1 also evokes an idea of tsedeq as a hypostatization, used as a synonym for Yahweh in a parallelism. The word retains its association with the "victory" (tsedeq) that Yahweh's vengeful "right arm" (tsedeq) will bring.

Is. 51:5, qarov tsidqi yatsa' yishi'.
My deliverance draws near speedily, my salvation has gone forth.

In 51:4 Deutero Isaiah enlists the common Deuteronomic terms torah and mishpat. They are emblematic of

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[79]Muilenburg, op. cit., V, 590.

Yahweh's past revelations, and are here used as generators of the light of the nations which will consolidate the exiles and lead them out of the darkness of captivity. Here mishpat also refers to the "judgement" against the nations. In vs. 5, Yahweh's tsedeq and yeshu'a draw near, and the nations will be subjugated ("my arms will rule the peoples"). The two terms qava and yachal, while they can mean "wait in hope," should not be rendered as such here. The RSV has correctly translated qava as "wait," while incorrectly rendering yachal as "hope." In Is. 60:9 the word yachal appears also ("the coastlands shall wait for me"). In 60:9-14 "coastlands" wait to be subdued, to pay tribute to Israel, to crouch abjectly before the Israelites. We have the same thought in 51:23 where the vanquished shall make their backs like the ground for the Israelites to walk upon (cf. Jos. 10:24; Zech. 10:5).

In our verse, tsedeq is used in a synonymous parallelism with yeshu'a. Here tsedeq is evocative of Yahweh's mighty deeds in war (tsidqot yhwh), and that attribute of Yahweh which brings victory and deliverance from enemies in battle (yeshu'a). It cannot be overemphasized that we are not dealing here with theological concepts, but with the poetic enlistment of holy war language. "Hear, O Israel," begins the holy war recitation in Dt. 20:3-4, "you draw near this day to war against your enemies...do not fear...Yahweh your God goes with you, to fight for you...to give you victory" (l'hoshi'a). In Dt. 33:21, the tribe of Gad is commended for joining the conquest with the rest of the tribes—for carrying out tsidqat yhwh. These examples show us that God's yeshu'a and tsedeq—at least as they were understood in connection with holy war—do not imply "divine grace" as that expression is usually applied, but demand an active

involvement on the part of the Israelites.

Is. 51:6, vishu'ati l'olam ti'yeh v'tsidqati lo taychat.
But my salvation will be forever, and my deliverance will never be ended.

Concerning l'olam ("forever") and lo taychat ("never be ended"), Knight writes that "God's saving love does not reach an end when we come to that moment which we call the end of the world. God's saving love must continue with him to all eternity."[80] But l'olam and taychat do not designate Knight's idea of eternity. The term l'olam expresses only "duration of the earth" or "entire life." The term taychat means "shattered"[81] or "brought down."

The usage of the parallel terms yeshu'a and tsedeq is here identical with the usage in 51:5. In vss. 5, 6 and 8, North translates these terms interchangeably as "victory" and "triumph."[82] In the same three verses, Torrey renders tsedeq as "victory," while rendering yeshu'a as "salvation" (twice) and "rescue."[83]

Is. 51:7, shim'u ela'i yod'ay tsedeq am torati v'libam.
Hearken to me, you who know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law.

Possibly the word tsedeq has a composite meaning here. It is associated in context with the mighty acts of Yahweh and the impending triumph of Israel; the correlative stich offers a popular Deuteronomic and prophetic thought concerning the ideal observance by the people of the "law."

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[80]Knight, op. cit., p. 213.
[81]Muilenburg, op. cit., V, 594.
[82]North, The Second Isaiah, p. 60.
[83]Torrey, op. cit. pp. 249-50.

The Israelites are here addressed by the prophet as yod'ay tsedeq. In a construct state before a noun, the participle "knowing" expresses a sense of "expert in."[84] Furthermore, the verb yada' implies intimate, experiential knowledge of something (such as carnal experience). Thus the Israelites are portrayed here as having intimate experience with the omnipotence of Yahweh, and also as having attained expertise in the revealed law of Yahweh (referred to in the subsequent stich). That the torah is now in their hearts is not to imply that it has been "spiritualized," detached from the particular observances of the "statutes," ordinances" and "commandments" (cf. Ezek. 36:27). To the Israelites, the heart is the locus of understanding, of pragmatic knowledge, the significance of the brain being unknown to them.[85] For Deutero Isaiah, the Israelites addressed in this passage have attained the Deuteronomic and prophetic ideal of becoming experts in just acts through their now spontaneous performance of Yahweh's requirements. He addresses the people with the active participle, not the imperfect or perfectum propheticum (cf. Jer. 31:33; Ezek. 36:27). By passing through the "furnace of affliction" and by adherence to the law, the Israelites now merit their triumphant return.

Is. 51:8, v'tsidqati l'olam ti'yeh vishu'ati l'dor dorim.
But my deliverance will be forever, and my salvation to all generations.

Here we have an effective repetition of the final distich in vs. 6, with an inversion of the two terms.

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[84]Cf. North, The Second Isaiah, p. 210.

[85]Kohler, op. cit., pp. 145-46.

Those who will be devoured by the "worm" and the "moth" in the preceding distich, who will "die like gnats" in vs. 6, are the oppressing peoples who will suffer Yahweh's judgement (mishpat), the "rule" (mishpat) of his "arms" (vss. 4-5).

> Is. 53:11, b'dato yatsdiq tsadiq ovdi l'rabim va'onotam hu yisbol.
>
> By his knowledge shall the righteous one, my servant, make many to be accounted righteous; and he shall bear their iniquities.

It is difficult for the disinterested scholar to address the commentary encompassing Is. 53; many (perhaps most) commentators have allowed their theological presuppositions to guide both their interpretations and their aesthetic sensibilities ("It is the most wonderful bit of religious poetry in all literature," writes Torrey, presumably after scrutinizing all of the "religious poetry in all literature"[86]).

Concerning the identity of the servant in this passage, there is much dispute among scholars. Perhaps the majority view the servant here as a personification of Israel; others see him as an ideal messianic figure; a distinct minority identify the servant as the prophet himself. As for the mission of the servant, few scholars disagree: his task is to suffer vicariously, to bear the sins of the guilty as an act of propitiation. "The servant has taken on him the guilt of 'us all,'" writes Muilenburg.[87] The passages reflect "Israel's atonement for the Gentiles," writes Torrey.[88] According to Pfeiffer, "The great thought

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[86]Torrey, op. cit., p. 409.

[87]Muilenburg, op. cit., V, 629.

[88]Torrey, op. cit., p. 409.

of the atoning effectiveness of the suffering and death furnished the interpretation of the death of Jesus on the cross: Christianity cannot be understood without the Second Isaiah."[89] The theological importance attached to ch. 53 (attested to in Pfeiffer's statement) has, we believe, generated scholarly fictions concerning its content. The servant—viewed as an individual or as Israel—is not suffering vicariously so that the many might be "declared innocent even though they were in reality guilty."[90] The Israelites do not need anyone to atone for their guilt. As Deutero Isaiah makes it abundantly clear, the Israelites were sent into exile becaused they had transgressed against Yahweh; they had suffered double for their transgressions (40:2); now, "the penalty having been paid by Israel in the fullest measure, God will restore His people to their homeland."[91] The "Gentiles" certainly were not guilty of transgressions (pesha') against Yahweh. They were outside the covenant; Yahweh had made no demands against which they might rebel (pesha'). Nor had they suffered "sickness" and "pains" which needed healing (vs. 4-5).[92] It is absurd to believe that any ancient Israelite envisioned his people's calamity as atonement for foreigners. The very idea of suffering vicariously so that the wicked might go unpunished is inimical to Old Testament literature as a whole (the scapegoats described in Lev. 16:8-26 do not have a propitiatory function; they are simply vehicles for the elimination of sin and impurity).

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[89]Robert H. Pfeiffer, Introduction to the Old Testament (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1948), pp. 479-80.

[90]Muilenburg, op. cit., V, 630.

[91]Orlinsky, Vetus Testamentum, p. 24.

[92]Op. cit., p. 53.

We understand the personage in Is. 53 to be the prophet himself. He is lamenting the fact that although he is innocent of any transgression, he has been compelled to suffer the collective punishment of his people; moreover, he laments the suffering he has endured because of his present occupation, viz., spokesman for God. Elijah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Uriah all suffered because of their calling; "it was their occupational hazard" which "necessarily brought into their wake suffering, and abuse, and jail, and even death...None of them had committed any sin for which they were suffering."[93] The prophet's lament often takes the form of poetic hyperbole where he describes himself as "a lamb that is led to the slaughter" (cf. Jer. 11:19) and as one "cut off from the land of the living" (cf. Jer. 11:18-20).[94] Such expressions in no way imply an actual death; in fact, the prophet goes on to describe (vss. 10-12) the long and prosperous life of the central personage--his reward for enduring the pains of his calling (scholars who envisage a vicarious suffering unto death would have us understand these final verses as expressing "the idea of resurrection or restoration of life."[95] The theological predisposition informing such interpretations is obvious).

The original Hebrew text of ch. 53 is hardly intact and many verses simply defy translation as they stand; vs. 11 is one of these verses. The verbs yir'eh and yisba' are left hanging without objects. North would read or after yir'eh, giving us "he shall see light."[96] Torrey reads b'dato ("by his knowledge") with the preceding yisba' and

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[93]Op. cit., p. 57.

[94]Op. cit., pp. 60-61.

[95]Muilenburg, op. cit., V, 629.

[96]North, The Second Isaiah, p. 244.

transposes yatsdiq and tsadiq: "He will be satisfied with the knowledge that he is right; My servant will bring many to the right."[97] At one time North deleted tsadiq as a dittograph,[98] but later retains it and translates, "my servant, himself righteous, shall bring righteousness to the many."[99] North doubts that the adjectival attribute (tsadiq) is in an appositional relation with the noun (ovdi), and prefers to understand it as a construct, "a kind of superlative." Yet North admits that such an understanding is barely supported by the analogies he proffers.[100] The Jewish Publication Society renders tsadiq as an appellation of God: "Who by his knowledge did justify the Righteous One to the many." This makes good sense in view of the prophet's understanding of his mission, but it places the noun (ovdi) in an untenable position.

For lack of convincing arguments to the contrary, we believe that tsadiq should be deleted as a dittograph. While not totally convinced, we would--with Torrey and North--read b'dato as the object of yisba'; this at least allows for a smooth 3:3 meter in the following distich, which we would understand as follows: "My servant has caused many to become right, since he has bore their punishment" (bore the consequences of their transgression). The imperfect verbs (yatsdiq and yisbol) are used here to express accomplished actions that are regarded as still influencing the present.[101] The second stich ("since he has bore their punishment") is

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[97]Torrey, op. cit., p. 422.

[98]North, The Suffering Servant, p. 126.

[99]North, The Second Isaiah, p. 65.

[100]Op. cit., p. 233.

[101]Gesenius-Kautzsch, op. cit., p. 316.

a circumstantial verbal clause that states the particular circumstance under which he "caused many to become right." The RSV rendering of the entire distich in the future tense simply does not make sense in regard to the description of the servant's prosperity in the preceding stichoi, nor in regard to the "therefore" (l'khen) that begins vs. 12 and is clearly the apodosis of vs. 11. The RSV translation is possibly guided by a desire to express the "continuing efficacy"[102] of the "resurrected" servant's work (this same desire probably generated the unwarranted translation of vs. 6 into the present perfect). While an idea of continuing efficacy can be said to accrue to the imperfect verbs here (our own description of the verbs above implies this), we believe that the RSV translation is influenced by a desire to posit a concept of continuing efficacy, rather than to communicate a semantic modality. Such a desire is certainly behind Muilenburg's understanding of the "alternation of the perfect and imperfect of the verbs as designating an act accomplished once for all and one that has continuing efficacy."[103] Muilenburg's application of this statement to vs. 11 is odd, since all of the verbs in this verse are imperfect. Moreover, any "alternation of the perfect and imperfect" that does occur in our chapter, is the same as occurs throughout the Bible (e.g., contiguous vav hahipukh clauses).

Is. 54:14, bitsdaqah tikonani rachaqi me'sheq.
In righteousness you shall be established; you shall be far from oppression.

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[102]Muilenburg, op. cit., V, 630.

[103]Op. cit.

Chapter 54 is a nationalistic poem of assurance, promising the restoration of Zion and the final triumph of the Israelites. Yahweh is portrayed as the solicitous husband, encouraging his wife, Israel, to anticipate conquest, prosperity and strength. The explicit nationalism here poses difficulties for those commentators who view Deutero Isaiah's mission as one of international concern. Torrey claims that it is "evident that no 'prophet of the Babylonian exile' is writing. Jerusalem is exhorted to expand on all sides, adding new territory to her former extent, in confidence of increasing prosperity."[104] North admits that "Notwithstanding D I's universalism...there is a note of nationalism, even of revanchism" in this chapter. This "irredentism," North continues, "...is a legacy from the... accounts of the conquest of the promised land."[105] Unlike Torrey, North attributes this poem to the prophet of the exile, yet fails to perceive that the "note of nationalism" predominates in chs. 40-55. Our contention that Deutero Isaiah often enlisted the language of holy war, evocative of the ritual conquest, is supported (at least in relation to our present chapter) by North's statements. The word tsdaqah in vs. 14, then, should be understood as pointing to Yahweh's mighty deeds in war, to victory, and perhaps even to a hypostasis of Yahweh: his tsedeq, his attribute of "justice," his retributive "right arm," will "establish" Israel and protect her from all enemies. North, on the other hand, unconvincingly asserts that the "only adequate translation of tsdaqah here is 'righteousness.'"[106]

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[104]Torrey, op. cit., p. 423.

[105]North, The Second Isaiah, p. 249.

[106]Op. cit., p. 253.

Is. 54:17, zo't nachalat ovday yhwh v'tsidqatam me'iti n'um yhwh.

This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord and their vindication from me, says the Lord.

The word nachalat is to be understood here as the climactic equivalent of the word yi'rash (RSV "possess") in vs. 3. The root yarash "is the verb regularly used in the story of the conquest of Canaan, where it involves the driving out of the original Canaanites and taking possession of their land."[107] North, who has had no difficulty in translating tsedeq as "victory" in previous chapters, hesitates in ch. 54: "In the earlier (especially Deuteronomic) literature Israel's 'inheritance' is the promised land of Canaan...We may here give to tsdaqah any content from 'vindication' (RSV) to 'salvation'...and 'righteousness,'" but not "'victory' in a military sense."[108] It is interesting to note that North would not object to rendering tsedeq here as "salvation"; we are thus shown how distant the theological concept of "salvation" has become from the militarily evocative word yeshu'a. But as North blithely states, Deutero Isaiah "was more concerned with the spiritual than with the material welfare of 'the servants of the Lord.'"[109] The "note of nationalism" in ch. 54 clearly afflicts North.

We understand the word tsdaqah in vs. 17 as the semantic equivalent to the word tsdaqah in vs. 14 above.

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[107]Snaith, Vetus Testamentum, p. 162.

[108]North, The Second Isaiah, p. 254.

[109]Op. cit.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

According to Wittgenstein, "the meaning of a word is in its use in the language."[1] A word has no essential meaning; it is a semantic marker. The language of Deutero Isaiah is not a theological language, but a poetic language; the semantic variations adhering to the word tsedeq in his poetry are determined by historical and poetical, not theological, considerations. Far too often, scholars have abstracted the word from the historical background informing this poetic use, and have attached tsedeq to an assumed theological pattern called "salvation history." But Deutero Isaiah does not offer us a theological perspective of orientation toward a synthetic culmination of salvation. Instead, he offers to his people, in their circumstance, a poetically amplified message of encouragement; a description of the omnipotence of their disparaged god, and the victorious restoration that they will attain under Yahweh's tutelage. In some contexts, his use of the word tsedeq recalls the mighty deeds of Yahweh and of Israel's warriors during the Conquest, the holy war wherein they possessed their cherished Zion. Tsedeq is sometimes found in passages evoking mythopoeic images of Yahweh as cosmogonic king and divine warrior; tsedeq often seems to be a hypostasis of Yahweh, exercising might in acts of creation, battle, and judicious revenge. Finally, the prophet's use of tsedeq is informed by the more ordinary applications of this word, related to proper actions and to juristic formulae, much as we find the word enlisted in the Deuteronomic literature and the other prophets. The various

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[1]Ludwig Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations, 3rd edition, trans. G. E. M. Anscombe (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co., 1958), p. 20.

connotations were not new to the Israelites, but were part of their intertwined literary, historical and religious language, and were readily comprehensible to them. We are not presented with any theological innovations in this poetry, but—for the most part—with an enthusiastic celebration of elements that had informed the national religion of Israel for centuries.

In the course of this study we have often opposed the interpretations of several fine scholars. We cannot help but feel presumptuous while criticizing the conclusions of men who have devoted their lives to the study of Deutero Isaiah. Probably our criticisms were sometimes harsh, and merely exhibited the over-reaction of youthful enthusiasm, enjoying its first taste of scholarly engagement. We cannot close, however, without mentioning our deeply felt respect for these scholars, and without apologizing for being unable—within the meagre scope of our study—to present the best fruits of their painstaking labor. Without their work, this study would not have been possible. We are especially grateful for the excellent studies produced by Muilenburg, North and Torrey. Although Torrey's work first appeared fifty years ago, his textual analysis is still invaluable, and his discussion on the prophet's poetic form has not, to our knowledge, been surpassed. The endurance of his work is indicative of the quality of scholarship we have had the pleasure of encountering in the course of our study.

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